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Near East/South Asia Report

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11 March 1985

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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

LARGE ARAB COMMUNITY SETTLES IN ATHENS

Athens TO VIMA in Greek 20 Jan 85 p 35

/Article by Olymbia Tsipira: "A...Small Arab City Within Athens" /

/Excerpts / "We Speak Arabic..." Undoubtedly you see this small sign in Arabic more and more recently in restaurants, jewelry stores, electrical supply or clothing stores, even in small bakeries...The Athens market "is opening" to a new consumer which is estimated at 50,000 Arabs: students, working people, executives of enterprises, rich businessmen...

Many Greek entrepreneurs are pinning their hopes on the Arab consumers. It appears that jewelry stores, bakeries and entertainment places are the luckiest.

Equally impressive is the "opening" of the Arabs in the Greek market where they excel as merchants or entertainers. According to certain reliable assessments, the Lebanese who came to Greece as a result of the civil war in their country are the most successful. But many others, from different Arab countries, are also successful entrepreneurs. In recent years they mushroomed into Arabic export-import trade enterprises by establishing banks, bakeries, restaurants, nightclubs, video clubs, etc.

The most manifested Arab "invasion" of the Greek market is in the news-stands (kiosks) in the Syndagma, Omonoia and Kolonaki Squares. Tens of Arab magazines and newspapers--printed in Europe--are being sold, thus increasing the business of the kiosks. The Lebanese magazines AL-HAWADIN and the Saudi Arabian magazine AL-MAJALLAN, both printed in London, as well as the Lebanese magazine EL-MUSTAQBAL, which is printed in Paris, have the largest circulation.

The newspapers with the largest circulation are the AL-NAHAR and AL-SAFIR, both of Lebanon and AL-QABAS of Kuwait. About a year ago an attempt was made by two Lebanese publishers to publish an Arabic newspaper in Athens, but after a few months AL-HIWAR closed down even though it had a circulation of 12,000 copies. The weekly newspaper AL-HAQA'ID started last June with Greek-Egyptian cooperation. Also, a Greek-Arab magazine is published in Athens. Its circulation reaches 10,000 copies.

An Arab bookstore, the Al-Manarah, which means lighthouse, operates on Asklepios Street in Athens. It is one of the best-known hangouts of Arab students and its owner is an Egyptian. At first it derived its financial support from sales of the Koran.

Without doubt the areas of entertainment and food are the ones where the Arab customs and Arab taste have "infiltrated" most. In the past 3 years the Arab restaurants have multiplied, especially in the areas around the hotels Hilton, Caravel and Kalamaki.

The opening of the trade-economic relations between Greece and the Arab countries--the result of which is the strong presence in Athens of the "brown" element--is also manifested in the establishment of Arab banks. According to Lebanese banker Sami Makarim the Greek-Arabic Bank opened in 1979, the first Arab bank opened in 1980 with Jordanian capital (Arab Bank) and the Universal Bank of Lebanon was established in 1984. A bank with Iranian capital is due to open in the near future.

At the same time there are in operation the so-called "sure" (non-competitive) businesses which have been established in accordance with the 1967 Law 89. They are purely Arabic established with Arab capital and their number today is at least 150. The managers and personnel of these businesses are Arabs, many of whom have established permanent residence in Greece.

Whether entrepreneurs or not, transients, students, professionals or plain working people, all these Arabs who, since 1976 especially, have adopted Greece as their second motherland or as a place for their enterprises and who trade, live or are nostalgic for their countries, are already making very evident their daily presence and influence on the Athenian market.

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CSO: 3521/160

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

TURKISH PAPER REPORTS ON ARMENIAN ACTIVITIES IN U.S.

Istanbul MARMARA in Armenian 29 Jan 85 p 1

[Text] The TERCUMAN correspondent reports from Washington that the Armenian lobby has stepped up its activities to have 24 April declared by Congress as a day of remembrance for "man's inhumanity to man." This bid, known as Resolution 37, will most likely be approved by the relevant congressional subcommittee in the coming days, and it is believed that the backers of the resolution will have no trouble in getting the 218 votes necessary to ensure passage in the full House.

In this connection, a congressional official declared that the Armenians are working intensely to accomplish their goal and that so far neither the White House nor the State Department have made any moves to block the passage of the resolution. It is believed that the executive branch will probably intervene later on, when the resolution is put to the full House vote.

9588
CSO: 4605/102

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

ANTI-TURKISH DEMONSTRATIONS TO BE HELD IN FRG

Istanbul MARMARA in Armenian 28 Jan 85 p 1

[Text] A massive anti-Turkish demonstration is being planned for 20 April in the FRG. Participants in the demonstration will include some members of the West German Social Democratic Party, groups affiliated with the Greens Party, trade unions and a number of Turkish fugitives. Nearly 25,000 people are expected to participate in this massive demonstration and intense work is already under way to prepare for it.

Certain circles have been unsettled by Turkey's admission into this year's Hanover Industrial Fair as a "fraternal country," and as a result they have threatened the organizers of the fair that they will create every possible disturbance if the invitation extended to Turkey is not withdrawn.

In this connection a wide-ranging propaganda campaign has been launched whereby it is charged that of the multitude of people arrested since the establishment of the military administration in 1980 200 have died under torture, that 800 people have been killed in the course of military operations and that 50 people have been hanged.

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CS0: 4605/101

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

PAPER DISCUSSES COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMS OF ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

Beirut AZTAG in Armenian 22 Jan 85 p 3

[Text] Between 24 and 28 April, hundreds of genocide survivors and thousands of spectators will witness an event in Washington which, by its scope and symbolic meaning, is destined to become one of the most unique chapters in annals of the history of Armenians in North America.

The central theme of the event is a depiction of the miraculous survival of the Armenian nation and its spectacular reincarnation and growth in the diaspora. Each activity organized within the framework of this event will symbolize this theme by its nature and contents.

This 5-day event, with its multiple aspects and levels, is directly sponsored by the North American Cilician Diocese of the Holy Apostolic Church of Armenia and has been organized by the Armenian National Committee with the assistance of several Armenian organizations. A large number of foreign dignitaries have already pledged their moral support for the event by accepting the National Commemorative Committee's invitation to join them as honorary members.

The wide-ranging framework of commemorative activities will include exhibitions, a festival of Armenian films, concerts, gatherings, ceremonies dedicated to the victims and especially the survivors of the genocide, youth conferences, lectures and various other events. The details of the program will be regularly announced through the Armenian press.

The presence of a large number of survivors and spectators at the event will naturally enhance the solemnity of the commemorative ceremonies and will help to draw the attention of the international community and political circles to the issue.

At this major and critical juncture in the existence of the Armenian nation, the ceremonies marking the 70th anniversary of the genocide also represent a chance to create symbols of inspiration for the future.

The picture radiated by the collection of the commemorative activities represents a true depiction of the sociopolitical and cultural atmosphere and trends all Armenian communities around the world. The commemorative ceremonies will show to the world that the Armenian nation has been reincarnated from the ashes of the genocide and that, more than ever, it continues to create while remaining faithful to its heritage. More importantly, the ceremonies will prove

that the Armenian nation is determined to attain its supreme national goals. The theme poster prepared for the commemoration and the slogan that has been adopted proclaim "eternal loyalty" to Armenia.

According to the organizing committee, the enormous effort and resources expended on this extremely important event will produce the desired results only if every Armenian individual living in the United States considers the event as his own and if every responsible Armenian makes participation in the ceremonies his right and his duty. No sacrifice would be excessive to insure complete success for this event.

The National Commemorative Committee is already working through its local branches to secure the participation of a large number of survivors. It is equally essential that thousands from the second and third generations also participate not only to display the continuity of our existence and our determination to persist, but also, and particularly, to show to the world that we are prepared to back our words with action.

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CSO: 4605/107

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

'RECOGNITION OF GENOCIDE' COMMITTEE REPORTS ON ACTIVITIES

Beirut ZARTONK in Armenian 10 Jan 85 p 2

[Text] On November 5, the Committee for the Recognition of the Armenian Genocide, a body affiliated with the Peoples' Permanent Court in Paris, invited representatives of Armenian organizations in Paris to a meeting to report on the moral and financial aspects of its work. The meeting was held in the reception hall of the St John the Baptist Armenian church in Paris and was attended by the representatives of nearly 15 organizations.

The chairman of the committee, Jirayr Shalian, explained the work of the committee which was created a year ago. He said that one of the products of the committee's work was a session of the Peoples' Permanent Court dedicated to the Armenian genocide. The session was held last April at the Sorbonne University.

Our readers are familiar with the repercussions of the court's verdict in the international community. The verdict was published in French and in English and copies of it were sent to all concerned parties. Shalian disclosed that the deliberations of the court, the relevant arguments, the court's verdict as well as supporting documents have been published as a separate volume in an edition of 15,000. The volume is entitled "The Crime of Silence" and was printed by the well-known publisher Flammarion. Shalian said that his committee has pledged buy 6,000 volumes of the first edition.

The committee's treasurer, Mrs Alice Aslanian-Samuelian, presented a report on the financial state of the committee. She reported that last year the committee had revenues of 441,702.91 French francs and incurred expenses of 380,063.68 French francs. According to Mrs Aslanian-Samuelian's report, the committee currently has 74,639.23 French francs in the bank. Mrs Aslanian-Samuelian noted that the committee plans to publish "The Crime of Silence" in English and in German and also wishes to publish in French the work "Germany and Armenia" by Lepsius. She underscored the value of that work in shedding light on the Armenian question in view of the significant evidence it contains.

It was also reported that work is under way to make a video cassette featuring major segments from the committee's sessions.

Mr Shalian expressed his gratitude to the Armenian community and the Armenian organizations of Paris for their united support for the committee and for their contributions toward the success of the court's session. He also called for their continued assistance for the realization of the said publications.

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE EXAMINED AT MONTREAL UNIVERSITY

Beirut AZTAG in Armenian 21 Jan 85 p 3

[Text] Recently, an unprecedented event took place in a 750-seat amphitheater in the University of Montreal. For the first time ever in this country, the Armenian genocide was debated in public. The debate featured Professor Jean-Pierre Derrien, a political science lecturer at the Laval University in Quebec, and Kevork Baghjian, J.D, who called for the debate. The moderator of the debate was Herbert Marx, a member of Quebec's provincial assembly from the R.C. McGhee electoral district. It was an article published by Marx in LE DEVOIR last May that led to the publication of two other articles in the same paper, finally culminating in the said debate.

Before we present a summary of the two theses offered at the debate, we would like to underscore a few positive as well as negative points.

Firstly, the debate spurred a great deal of interest among local Armenians. Nearly 700 Armenians from all walks of life and political backgrounds attended the event and followed the debate with intense interest even though some of them did not understand a word of French. But they had come filled with faith and expectations. Those expectations definitely did not go unfulfilled. It is true that the debate was not of any crucial significance: The fate of the Armenian nation would not be decided there; it was a purely academic and mental exercise, but nevertheless the Armenians felt satisfied because Dr Baghjian's arguments--their own arguments for recognition--were so strong that they could not be defeated. Of course, members of the audience did not hide their feelings and thoughts; they expressed their satisfaction or dismay with applause and sometimes with "noise."

Secondly, it appeared that the entire hall was unified in its feelings and sympathies. Members of the audience were simply Armenians who had and have a single viewpoint, the Armenian viewpoint, regarding our most basic national concepts, namely our Cause and our inalienable right to live freely in our own homeland.

Thirdly, foreigners were markedly absent from this event, even though announcements appeared well in advance in three dailies. Barely 100 foreigners attended the event, though they displayed profound interest. This means that while this exchange of views was the first of its kind, it must not be the last.

Fourthly, no matter how unacceptable the arguments of people like Derrienigue can be for us, these are people who have studied, researched and learned about our history, though not adequately. If they have a pro-Turkish stance today--although Derrienigue declared that he is not Turkey's defense attorney--what will stop them from taking a pro-Armenian stance tomorrow if they continue their studies and education? That is another point to ponder.

The first speaker was Professor Derrienigue. He disputed the charge that a) World War I created an opportunity to implement a pre-planned genocide against the Armenians and that b) the number of the victims was as high as 1.5 million (his estimate was 300,000). He argued that the official recognition of the genocide would be an unwise and improper step from a standpoint of verifying these facts and finding out the truth.

He then said: "Today, it is too late to punish those who were responsible for the criminal act of 1915. They are all dead, and I am concerned about ideas regarding inherited collective guilt and responsibility." He added that there are political motives behind the drive for recognition, namely the establishment of an Armenian republic on territory inhabited by Turks today, and insisted that this would lead to new tragedies and new wars. He contended that one injustice cannot be rectified by another injustice.

In his turn, Dr Baghjian first showed, using documented evidence, that the genocide was a pre-planned act and that it was in fact decided upon in 1911. He said that the Armenians were not only massacred, but their movable and immovable property was illegally seized and that those who survived were either converted to Islam or were deported. In his arguments, Dr Baghjian used testimony from Turkish sources as well as foreign diplomats, in particular the writings of French Premier (Milerand).

Dr Baghjian noted that we are not accusing the Turkish people but some Turks, or more correctly, the Turkish government.

Then, referring to the issue of overturning the sovereignty of Turks currently living on our lands, Dr Baghjian stressed that those lands have been ours since the time of antiquity and that they have been seized from us. He added that the Turks can therefore have no sovereignty rights over those lands.

Dr Baghjian said that today Turkey continues to commit genocide against the Armenian people by blocking their return to their homeland and that as long as the consequences of the crime are perpetuated the issue cannot be subject to any statutes of limitations. He added that the guilty have not died, that they are still there and that they are continuing the genocide with the collaboration of the superpowers. Dr Baghjian concluded:

"The Turkish government must recognize the genocide out of deference for the Right and Justice and must pay reparations to the Armenian people so that the genocide ceases in Turkey and so that other peoples are not annihilated by genocides. The international community must also act without delay, and it must avoid getting carried away with strategic and economic interests or ideological considerations."

Herbert Marx, the moderator, pointed out that genocides are always committed in times of war and confusion and that while the number of the victims in a genocide may be debatable, that does not stop genocides from being genocides.

Professor Derrienigue, who opposed official recognition, acknowledged that a genocide had taken place.

Later, Derrienigue and Dr Baghjian debated the accuracy of various sources, the number of the victims and the impartiality of the witnesses.

Professor Derrienigue said: "I do not believe in historic rights, but in the security and freedom of people living today."

Dr Baghjian pointed out that justice cannot be done by explaining away injustice.

Derrienigue said: "What reparations can Turkey pay to you? You lead more comfortable and prosperous lives in Soviet Armenia and the Diaspora than they do in their country. I agree that the wrong that has been done must be acknowledged if it can be corrected, but otherwise there is no point in discussing it."

In response, Dr Baghjian asked: "Then is there no law? If the Turks are poor, do they have the right to rob us? What should we do then?"

Professor Derrienigue replied: "I do not want to answer that question. I am not the one who will advise you on what to do. I am glad that I am not obliged to answer that question. I simply expressed my opinions and my reaction. It is fortunate that Armenians live today in this country. I am not very experienced on this subject but I would not want to see the Turkish-Armenian dispute assume the proportions of the Arab-Israeli conflict."

In his closing words, Dr Baghjian clearly stressed that the Armenian people are not asking for pity, but that they are demanding that justice be done in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention on Genocide. He said that on the 70th anniversary of the genocide the Armenian nation is asking the international community to force the Turkish government to acknowledge the genocide. He added: "The civilized world must listen to and hear this voice. Because it is late, and the Turkish government must admit the truth and must enter a dialog with us. That is what justice demands. That is what reason demands."

At the conclusion of the debate, Herbert Marx said that the debate did not change his opinions. He added that he is convinced that the Armenian genocide must be given official recognition.

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CSO: 3554/105

EGYPT

PRIME MINISTER OUTLINES SIMPLIFIED BUREAUCRATIC POLICIES

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 21 Dec 84 pp 1, 3

[Article: "Kamal Hasan 'Ali Announces Simplification of Procedures To Deal With Public at Land Register, Telephone and Passport Offices; Reduction of Customs Fees on Production Requirements"]

[Text] Prime Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali announced that the procedures for dealing with the public at the Land Register and the telephone and telegraph offices will be simplified and that a new system will be established to deal with the public and to insure that the public obtains the services of these utilities within a set period of time. The experiment will begin at the Land Register Office in al-Nasr City.

The prime minister said that no retroactive decrees or laws will be applied to investors and that the government seeks to protect and tend all projects, be they public sector, private sector or joint sector projects.

The prime minister also said that a committee has been formed to reduce the customs fees on production requirements so as to protect the national industry. He pointed out that the public sector authorities do not interfere in the activities of companies but that these authorities will contribute their expertise and advice to stop the losses of companies and to deal with the issue of open credit.

The prime minister further said that the banks have begun turning toward land reclamation, that five banks have offered to reclaim 100,000 feddans and that facilities have been offered to investors in land reclamation.

At the same time, the comprehensive agricultural land survey being conducted by the Scientific Research and Technology Academy will be completed next April to curtail and stop the encroachment of construction development on cultivable lands.

He also said that the price of desert land used for industrial projects will be set.

Determination of Cultivable Lands

Prime Minister Kamal Hasan 'Ali said that a comprehensive survey has been conducted on the desert lands and that the Scientific Research and Technology

Academy is currently surveying the cultivable lands. Nearly 1.5 million feddans have already been surveyed and the survey is scheduled to be completed next April. He said that this survey will contribute to curtailing the encroachment of construction development on cultivable lands in both the villages and the cities.

The prime minister added that since the issuance of Law No 3 of 1983 prohibiting the removal of cultivable top soil, such removal has dropped by 80 percent and that we will exert efforts to find alternatives to red bricks.

At the monthly television symposium, moderated by Sa'id Sunbul and attended by Ahmad Baha'-al-Din, a journalist from AL-AHRAM; Mahfuz al-Ansari, chief editor of AL-JUMHURIYAH; Ibrahim Nafi', chief editor of AL-AHRAM; and Makram Muhammad Ahmad, chief editor of AL-MUSAWWAR, the prime minister said that facilities have been offered for land reclamation, that such lands will be sold at 400 pounds per feddan and that the state will supply them with utilities. He also said that a map has been drawn up for the lands which can be reclaimed and cultivated, that these lands amount to 800,000 feddans, that the banks have offered to reclaim 100,000 feddans and that the government is encouraging the banks to embark on this project.

The prime minister said further that 30 percent of these lands have been allotted for cooperative associations, 10 percent for individuals and the rest for major firms and banks.

Danger of Soil Removal

The prime minister pointed out that if soil removal activity continues at the past rates, we will lose 1.7 million feddans of cultivable lands within 10 years during which time we will not reclaim more than 50,000 feddans a year and reclaimed lands will require 8-10 years to reach the productive level.

Land Prices

The prime minister also said that the price of desert lands used for industrial projects has also been set.

He added that the crop structure map is drawn up according to various estimates and in light of consumption needs and water availability and that the state is interested in exports and increased production in the coming phase.

Increased Exports

He said further that during the first quarter of the current fiscal year, agricultural exports rose by 16.4 percent and industrial exports by 15.5 percent. He added that we obtained high-productivity rice seedlings from Japan to increase rice production in Egypt and to export this crop anew. Rice exports took second place behind cotton, with the country exporting last year 20,000 tons of rice which we will try to increase to 70,000 tons this year. This quantity could be even larger if it were not for the losses that have afflicted the (Rihu) variety of the crop. We will try to avoid the causes

of such losses and if we cannot, the cultivation of this variety can be terminated.

Experiments To Increase Production

The prime minister said that experiments are underway to increase the productivity of crops, including experiments on corn in which the production per feddan can be increased from 7 irdebs to 34 irdebs. We also have nearly 76 unconventional crops which are exported and we will exert efforts to increase the production of such crops and will explore new export markets in Africa and Asia.

Correcting Firms

Speaking of the public sector's national authorities, the prime minister said that the objective of these authorities is not to interfere in the activities of firms but to advance assistance and expertise to the firms and to contribute to dealing with losses and with open credit.

Rationalizing Subsidy

The prime minister also said that the issue of rationalizing the subsidy has been presented to the universities and the parties for study and we are still awaiting the outcome of these studies. The universities have actually contributed to offering solutions for the housing problem.

He added that production of the regular-type loaf of bread will continue until the people demand the improved loaf, (for which the demand amounts only to 18 percent). However, this demand is growing.

Trade Issues

Regarding investment, the prime minister said that he will hold a meeting with the General Union of Chambers of Commerce to discuss issues concerning the trade sector and to develop solutions for them. This is an approach followed by the government with all the organizations operating in the economic sector.

Absolutely No Difference

He said that there is no discrimination among projects, be they public sector, private sector or joint sector projects, that no retroactive laws will be issued nor will laws be implemented retroactively, that we will exert efforts to eliminate all the obstacles facing the investor and to achieve stability in the economic laws and that protection and care will be given to all projects, regardless of whether they are public, private or joint sector projects.

The prime minister noted that as a result of the noticeable stability in the preceding period, we have 127 serious studies to set up projects with investments amounting to 400 million pounds.

He said that the government seeks to streamline the consumption of energy and that working teams of specialists have been formed to study this issue.

Cement Plants

The prime minister added that contracts have been concluded for six cement plants and that some of them are scheduled to be completed in 1988. Moreover, contracts have been concluded for five plants to produce steel reinforcement rods. These plants are under construction and will lead to savings in foreign currency.

He added that a committee comprised of experts from the ministries and of businessmen has been formed to discuss reducing the customs fees on production requirements so as to protect the national industry.

Increased Production

The prime minister added that we will exert efforts to increase production, since our imports are worth nearly 9.5 billion pounds and our exports worth 4.5 billion pounds.

The prime minister also said that he has received six invitations to visit friendly countries but that the government has focused recently, and is still focusing, on internal action and that it is possible to respond to only one or two invitations in the new year. However, we are accustomed to action and we will not speak until after implementation.

8494

CSO: 4504/161

EGYPT

INFORMATION MINISTER DISCUSSES MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Cairo MAYU in Arabic 8 Oct 84 pp 6, 8

[Interview with Safwat al-Sharif, minister of information: "Party Experts and Opinion Holders Are Invited To Participate in Symposiums Under the Umbrella of Nationalism, Away From Party Affiliation. Whenever We Elevate The Level of Debate in Our Party Press, We in Turn Elevate the Level of Democratic Practice"; date and place not specified]

[Text] I hesitated a great deal to interview the minister of information.

I had my reasons, the main one being the difficulty for one media person to interview another, especially if the discussion centers on important information matters.

This difficulty was becoming more apparent to me as I realized that the man responsible for information in Egypt is Minister Safwat al-Sharif. Between us there exist such feelings of affection, friendship, brotherhood, appreciation and respect as explicitly to color our discussion with facets touching upon all these feelings.

But, on the other hand, intentional silence does great injustice to the man. The masses, after all, have the right to know how the minister of information thinks, which subjects concern him, what he is contemplating for the future of Egyptian information, what was the outcome of his visits to various information organs, which of his ideas have been implemented and what he hopes to achieve in the future, how he regards Egypt's relations with the Arab states, what has occurred during the interval of the break in relations, and what the situation of information cooperation between Egypt and her Arab sisters had been like.

There are many questions that cannot be staved off by the difficulty of discussion between two media persons, nor would it be right that they should be stayed by deep affection for this man who occupies the seat of primary responsibility for information in Egypt.

Thus the ensuing discussion, and thus the initial question to Mr Safwat al-Sharif, minister of information:

[Question] Your story in the information field, when and how did it start?

[Answer] My story in the information field began more than 10 years ago. I took the first step when I occupied the position of director general for internal information in the General Organization for Information, the position in which I was active until approximately the end of 1975.

I confess that I was extremely happy in choosing internal information as this position enabled me to practice the process of communication with the masses through nearly 50 information centers that are dispersed in various locations. These centers have given me a great opportunity to come into contact with society, to acquaint myself with the opinion leaders, to inquire into the nature of public opinion and its direction, and to prepare the information message.

In truth such an information message is considered highly difficult inasmuch as it is based on discussion and personal contact, which means that the reaction is immediate and direct. This is in contrast to what takes place in television, broadcasting or the press where the contact is established from one side. A long time passes before the media person becomes aware of the echo and subsequently measures the trends of public opinion.

However, the reaction to the direct contact information operation affords a great opportunity to discover the reality of the trends in public opinion and subsequently creates the topical depth which enables you to confront this opinion and actually influence it.

This period has also enabled me to discover the true capabilities of internal information and to understand how weak those capabilities were at that time, in spite of the fact that the human complement employed in it possessed a high standard of expertise, knowledge and education. This topical and comprehensive knowledge also gave me an opportunity to develop later on when I assumed a bigger responsibility, as I had in front of me the picture in all its ramifications and details.

Since 1976 I was given the opportunity to acquaint myself with the other side of the information process, as I was responsible for the external information sector with the rank of deputy minister. This was another opportunity as external information had at one stage been reduced to achieving a measure of guidance for consensus on the state level. After the spurt of 1973, the role of external information had to increase and become greater, and this was an opportunity to acquaint myself with the nature of external information. This stage had not witnessed a measure of development and planning so that I became conversant with the information process and acquainted myself with the trends of international public opinion. I also visited many of the bureaus for external information and handled the coverage of the president's travels at that time.

After that I assumed the post of deputy director of the General Organization for Information for approximately 2 years. This afforded me a comprehensive overview of all organization agencies and gave me the opportunity to handle the printing and information output operations as well as those of the data and the various information reports, including political analysis and other related fields, which may be considered as an extension of the original nature of my work at the office of the presidency in the area of data gathering and public opinion studies over an extended period.

In 1978 I had the honor of being selected as director of the General Organization for Information, and this too was tantamount to a transitional stage between internal and external information, in the shadows of war conditions and tremendous changes, signalling at that time the emergence of the peace initiative.

I was closely associated with the peace initiative and was responsible for setting up the largest press center to be set up on Egyptian soil until now, where approximately 1,500 journalists were received at the Mina House Hotel. I would therefore say that the Information Organization period was one of those information stages that were full of changes, for our information goals had remained limited since 1948, but with the new tendencies and the peace strategy, information had to pave the way for those tendencies and that strategy, provided it was basically convinced of their soundness, for he who has lost something, cannot give it away.

From War Information to Peace Information

[Question] Do you consider that this stage was difficult?

[Answer] I think that it was one of the most difficult stages, because it was incumbent upon us to channel the change into the realization of the peace strategy as a natural outcome of the October War. It was also incumbent upon us to take the road to peace and whatever paths that ensue from it for the benefit of society. At that time negotiations and the signing of the peace agreements were under way, with all the difficult positions they entailed, be they Egypt's or Israel's positions, because peace did not come easily, as you remember. Numerous meetings were held in Egypt, London and Geneva. Progress was difficult in them, and we always had to be careful that our movement toward peace was clear and coming from a position of strength, expressing a real desire for peace, without ever meaning surrender. External information played a very big and extremely energetic part at this stage.

[Question] Were there other matters that accompanied the problem of transition from war information to peace information?

[Answer] We had at the same time to face the strategic change concerning existential matters in the Arab nation and to treat them in a new way based on capitalizing on the October war and the October victory. It was

not logical that victory should stop merely at the [Suez] crossing, without capitalizing in the media on the violent tremor ensuing from the October war in a good and effective manner that would support Egyptian diplomacy in its moves to realize and capitalize on the return from this victory.

We have exploited the October victory. From a limited local victory, we have come out with wider horizons and larger goals. Information had a big and extremely effective part in this exploitation.

For the first time, Egyptian information also had to be able, I would not say to repulse but to create a relevant, calm and strong debate concerning the trends which have not understood or absorbed the dimensions of the peace agreements, and thereby have accused Egypt of seeking a separate peace, or that it has abandoned the Arab cause.

This stage also witnessed the beginning of the return of Egyptian land in Sinai. Egyptian information had to enter into a cultural debate with Israeli information, since foreign correspondents had flocked to Cairo, which became a big information center with more than 300 correspondents, in addition to broadcasting stations, television networks and the editors in chief of newspapers and magazines.

We have started to take up this cultural challenge through the information media. Undoubtedly, Egyptian information at this stage was, God be praised, on a responsible level in facing this cultural challenge, as the Israeli side itself confirms. It was capable of movement, of rendering information services, of informational confrontation, and of opening highly developed information centers in al-'Arish, Cairo and Umm Khushayb. I can say that there was a real flowering of external information, and that this period was a real stage for the activities of internal information.

A Serious Development in the Essence of the Information Message

[Question] This was on the level of information services concerning external activities. What about these services on the local level?

[Answer] I think that the information media did not perform this aspect through that stage, whether it be through news services or information services or putting newspaper leaderships in the picture completely so as to enable them to report the course of events faithfully. We were following what the foreign press and external broadcasts were reporting, and analyzing the political and information positions of various states. In short, we were careful to generate information production that serves the Egyptian press, Egyptian writers, Egyptian broadcasting and all who work and study in this area.

This period had witnessed the breaking of diplomatic relations with the Arab brothers, and the job was extremely difficult for both external and internal information, especially as we were careful that the Egyptian

citizen should not feel, even for a single moment, that he had renounced his Arabism or that he was not a part of the Arab nation. It was incumbent upon us to affirm his Arab affiliation at the same time that we had to face up to his being attacked by some of the Arab information media, and to various stances.

The required equation was one that would reflect that reality of what was happening on the Egyptian street to all of them, which is that peace is a real popular persuasion. The difficult equation, however, was in achieving this, and at the same time letting him feel that he is not far from his Arab nation. This was a difficult job but we carried it out successfully, praised be God, and we are now reaping its fruits, for the present and for the future.

[Question] What about the fruits of that stage too, that had its consequences in the information field?

[Answer] This period has also witnessed political changes on the path to democracy. There was the experiment of the formation of parties and their multiplicity, and it was incumbent upon us to consolidate this experiment through symposia and discussions. There was also the stage undergone by internal information, which was fulfilling its role since the coming of the revolution in the call for revolution and moving popular feelings to embrace its goals, especially during those periods which witnessed conspiracies against Egypt and its future, for it was up to internal information to mobilize national feelings and to reinforce national affiliation.

After this came the democracy stage and the multiplicity of parties, and it was up to internal information to pursue new directions and ideas, anchored in relevancy and depending on debate, and to adopt the authentic causes of the Egyptian citizen. The question arises: Are these centers capable of fulfilling this role?

The answer is that it was incumbent upon us to undertake a new development operation which took shape in the retraining of the labor force, the dispatching of missions and the setting up of a new type of modern information centers. There are the Nile centers which now number 10 and which will reach 20 centers during the coming 2 years.

With the development of the internal information operation, symposia and the debate about relevancy began. Thus we switched over from propaganda information to practical information, or information that adopts causes, or information that takes part in an educational operation for adults in the wider sense, which means the facing of problems. We are acquainted with development information which deals with the population increase problem and its effect on agricultural and industrial development, etc. This period has witnessed international symposia on the population problem and also those problems linked to comprehensive development in Egypt.

Egypt's Informational Sovereignty

[Question] What about the other stage, that is, the stage of the chairmanship of the board of trustees for the Broadcasting and Television Union?

[Answer] At the beginning of 1980, I had the honor of being selected chairman of the board of trustees for the Broadcasting and Television Union. This was one of those extremely difficult stages, because television, as any other stage facility, had reached the end of the hypothetical age of its studios after four wars, but as an information medium, it had a big part to play. It is necessary for it to stand on its own two feet, employ modern technology, communicate a good content in all areas, participate in changing attitudes, link the citizen to his country and transmit the voice of Egypt to the Arab nation.

Television differs from the book or magazine or newspaper in that it addresses millions of people internally and externally. That is why I had to begin a modernizing operation with the aim of rebuilding this medium in order for it to become strong, capable, influential, and capable of reaching every citizen on Egyptian soil, in addition to the Arab nation and the Islamic world too. We also had to address our African continent and our sons outside the country. That is why it was necessary for us to enter into a challenge and an intense struggle for change. In fact the state strongly supported this stage, and we, in addition, have developed our own resources so as to be able to achieve independence for these national media.

It was thought that this stage would require 10 years. Optimists maintained that it could come about in 1986, but we, with God's help and with earnest and faithful efforts of our engineers and the staff of television and broadcasting, had instituted a plan whose fruits began to become apparent after only a few months. We replaced the television station in the Delta and Cairo, and we then built the Alexandria, then the Damietta centers. We also started construction on a station for the second channel, so as to equalize the two channels.

The important thing is that with God's help a comprehensive development and modernization has taken place. Television has regained its studios, and new regulations that encourage artists and workers on all levels have been instituted to enable this medium to become a medium of attraction and not repulsion for the sons of Egypt and for the accomplishments of Egypt. And the migrating birds have returned.

This stage has also witnessed the extension of television transmission to al-'Arish and then to Matruh. This is a genuine source of pride for the government of the National Democratic Party because it concerned itself with the right of the Egyptian human being, whatever his place or position, to know, learn, acquire culture and find recreation. Thus, thanks to information, there are no longer any remote areas, as a human being does not feel that he is in exile if he can make much of his day,

his present and his information, and if he can exist, keeping pace with his capital and the whole world. That is how he would feel now as he sits in al-Salum, al-Qusayr, Safajah, Rafah, Sharam al-Shaykh or al-Wahat, al-Kharijah or al-Dakhilah.

Information is now one the rights of the citizen, and this is the democracy of information. That is why I can never separate myself, as a minister that is, from the General Organization for Information because the beginning was a new information school based on the principle of the belief in achieving information sovereignty through technology that would deliver this information message to every citizen in Egypt and to all the areas that we want our information to reach.

Sovereignty here is sovereignty in content and influence, for no other information media is capable of competing with it on its own soil in distinctive production, or of competing with it on its own soil while it is the possessor of culture and history, or of competing with it in any information project whatever its content because pioneering Egypt can never permit any encroachments on the primacy of its information.

This is the philosophy of information sovereignty, but then there is another philosophy and that is the strategy of Egyptian information, which means the realization of social equality. For social justice is not only expressed in one's subsistence, nor in the equality of opportunity alone, but also in that the Egyptian citizen should not be stripped of his right to know his country, nationhood and affiliation thoroughly.

We All Work Openly

Our sons who guard the borders and assure national security, be they in the armed forces, the police, officers, or border guards have to fall within the circle of Egyptian affiliation and it therefore was necessary that information had to be competent and influential, relevant and without recriminations, but capable of information deterrence at the proper time, so that none would imagine that Egyptian information is powerless to reach them.

Hence there was the construction of extremely powerful stations, and hence there was a technological revolution in this utility. It was not a revolution in iron, supplies and stations, but a revolution serving a diplomatic, social and economic policy, for the realization of social principles, having at the same time a political capability.

The world today includes among the forces of an influential country its information establishment and its ability to influence and gain the confidence of its citizens. That is why Egyptian information strategy aims at creating constant confidence between the Egyptian citizen and viewer, and the various information media.

When we look at the present stage, we find that we have genuine information that has lost its aspect of fear. It is true that Egyptian policy and Egypt under the leadership of President Mubarak made the job of information easy as a result of clear-sightedness, clarity of purpose and not concealing anything from the people, but the basis is that we do not have one bright situation and another that is dark; we work in the open, and Egyptian policy works in the open. Finally, information reflects political, economic and social activity without concealment. At the same time there is no censorship, no censorship at all on any newspaper and no interference in the affairs of any information establishment. The relationship between the press and the Ministry of Information is amicable and conducive to creating good, clean and clear channels between the government and the press.

The Relationship Between the Ministry of Information and the Press

[Question] Shall we halt a little here to further illuminate the relationship between the Ministry of Information and the press?

[Answer] We are helping the press to fulfill its role in acquiring information, and easing its task in preparing for a democratic atmosphere, and we ask all officials to treat criticism with open-mindedness because we are at a transitional stage to democracy. This is a difficult stage and that is why we are convinced that the role of the Ministry of Information is not to argue or mobilize against other opinion, but that it has a role affirming that this is democracy, and that the critic carries lanterns to throw light on negative attitudes so we can treat them. What is required is that we profit from the other opinion. If what is intended, however, is distortion and lack of relevancy, then we have to answer and explain because the responsibility of information is represented in keeping the equilibrium in society.

Equilibrium in society does not occur when public opinion hears from one side. On the other hand we are a developing society, moving along the path of development after coming out from several long battles, and encountering fast economic changes. All this demands that information be advocacy and capable, and that censorship in it springs from conscience. In this way we would have relevancy and composure, and would move away from provocation, for this is a school that is over with because it does not correspond to the nature of the stage we are undergoing.

I would like to say that there is no information black-out on anything, but there is an information equilibrium, and the distance between composure and provocation is hair thin, which when crossed moves matters from relevance to subjectivity.

The right choice of words, discussion and the avoidance of subjective aspects would also create a balanced information climate for society. Let us also not forget that the National Democratic Party had put out the call for democracy, and that it is the one which has adopted this

call and is now advocating deepening it in order for it to become a genuine practice and not an experiment. That is why it is anxious that society's confidence in democracy should not be shaken after the operation has turned into a settling of accounts, those before '52 and after '52, and the accounts before May 15 and after May 15, and the history of Egypt becomes the torn, disconnected history of personalities.

The signs of the stage we are living through now are as clear as day. We are witnessing a democracy never encountered before in our history. The feet of this democracy are constitutional legality and the rule of law, its wings are the multiplicity of parties, freedom of the press and freedom of expression, and its head is the serious, firm and deep conviction of President Mubarak and the political leadership in pressing for more democracy.

It is up to information to establish democracy, constitutional legality and the rule of law firmly, and to believe in the multiplicity of parties, freedom of expression and opinion, and to create a kind of national solidarity that guarantee rallying around modern national problems.

Building Through the Path of Development

[Question] This is about the first part of the concept of democracy. What is the other side of this concept?

[Answer] The second part is sustained by development, through the building of modern Egypt, building through the path of economic, social and political development, and everything that enters into the framework of comprehensive development.

Development is connected with the operation of confronting society's problems and solving them, the ability to aid the citizen in easing his hardships, the attempt to repair the economic axis, raising thereby the standard of the citizen and propelling him to wider horizons, and with solving the problems of youth and childhood, and all of Egypt's problems. All this can only come about through development and the increase in production.

We are living in the era of President Mubarak--and I speak as a responsible minister of information--in a democratic period, hitherto unknown in Egypt. For under the auspices of the democratic parties, effective television and broadcasting, and new Arab relations, goals become clear. Democracy is a clear goal. Development is a clear goal. The socio-psychological stability which serves our purposes--all are clear goals.

That is why I say that there is no situation now in Egypt which is not presented clearly, in all its facets, be it a matter of health, cleanliness, communications, hospitals, universities or education. Any matter is open to discussion and every citizen feels this.

When television presents a discussion or symposium, it does not intend to express government policy so as to convince people, but to clarify all facets to the people, and to every responsible official too, so that the whole community moves to overcome this problem or solve that matter.

[Question] This takes us to what was previously raised by the opposition about its right to use television for self expression. What is the true situation, and what is your position in relation to it?

[Answer] One of the signs of this stage, as we say, is to have psychological stability, this stability being necessary for the parties, too, in order to practice genuine democracy, and that is why the parties have been given the opportunity to express themselves, and they took sufficient time for this. We had actually settled this according to the law, after closing the door to nominations and reassignments. But in spite of everything, we did not follow the example of some democratic states in allocating time according to the percentages of votes in the previous elections, but said that we would give equal time to all parties, since our aim was to realize democratic practice by motivating the base, so that the masses would go to the ballot boxes understanding party programs, and without leaving us with complications and fear regarding this matter at all.

Some, unfortunately, could not distinguish between election propaganda and the function of party programs. In spite of this the national press was open and debating all points of view, just as the party press was open. Television, however, is different, having its own form and manner, but in any case political symposia and programs slacken somewhat during the summer when people are on vacation, but we will begin new activities as of this month. Under the umbrella of nationalism, all party experts and opinion holders will be invited to those symposia and programs without any regard to party affiliations, but without placing any party signs because we want to retain the national character and debate our existential problems away from party affiliations.

We want the nation permanently in dealing with its affairs, but that does not preclude the presence of opinions and trends.

When our external information reflects a picture of Egypt, it does not function as party information because Egyptian policy is a pan-Arab policy. Similarly, broadcasting and television programs are national programs. Are religious programs, cultural programs, newscasts, entertainment items or the accomplishments of the state partisan? They are the accomplishments of Egypt and all Egyptians. The one who builds is the Egyptian citizen, who casts his party affiliation aside when he is in the factory, at work, at school or in the offices of a company.

As for the debate which reflects points of view, we have the sessions of the People's Assembly, which is a living and vibrant picture carried faithfully by the information media, in a measure that can be accommodated, and in a manner that reflects the real content to every citizen.

Assembly sessions do not in the least discriminate between one opinion and another, and no one can claim that his opinion has been ignored because we are intent on presenting genuine and truthful information.

In my opinion, whenever we elevate the level of debate in our party newspapers, and in all outlets of expression, we in turn elevate the level of democratic practice.

We Have Reached the Outskirts of Saudi Arabia and Banghazi

[Question] All this discussion has almost exclusively focused on internal information; what about our information relations with the Arab countries?

[Answer] Information relations with the Arab countries are extremely good, and this is clearly apparent in all relations, be they on the national or personal levels, and Egypt is represented by its experts, engineers, programs and numerous productions in all the Arab information media.

We must also know that Arab information relations were never severed, as all our information bureaus in the Arab states have remained in place in spite of the severing of diplomatic relations, this in answer to the requests of the Arab information ministers at that time.

Our bureau in Jordan was opened before the resumption of relations, when the sister Jordanian minister of information undertook her visit and there was an agreement on the exchange of correspondents and media persons. Correspondents for the Voice of the Arabs are roaming over the whole of the Arab region, and meeting with every welcome from their colleagues there. The demand for Egyptian information experts is increasing. Arab information media operate on the shoulders of our engineers and through the contents of our programs and serials. We have exported programs that range from 7 to 8 million dollars in value, and this indicates that Egyptian production serves its Arab nation, as it also indicates that the level of our production has witnessed a big jump in tandem with studios and services improvements and the opening up of opportunities.

We have produced numerous dramatic serials which deal with the problems of society, standing close to it and reflecting its picture, and it is clear now that our production is in accord with the reality of Egyptian society and serves the Arab citizen, as it is now the guardian table around which the whole Arab family congregates.

On the transmission level, we have reached the outskirts of Saudi Arabia, Banghazi in Libya, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon and the West Bank.

We do not interfere in the policies of other countries, but we express our clear, moderate and wise policy, and that is why we meet with every respect from the Arab base in what we transmit through Egyptian radio and television.

Through the National Distribution Company we back the distribution of the Egyptian press, a backing that aims at the diffusion of the press within Egypt and its reaching all the remote areas, a backing that will also take the Egyptian newspaper to the circulation and proliferation of the past in order for it to regain its position.

There is no doubt that there is Arab acceptance of Egyptian information, especially after President Mubarak halted the information campaigns. Egyptian information has been liberated from irascibility, improvisation and the interference in the affairs of others, and has come to address the conscience and mentality of the Arab citizen through relevance. Had it not been for the part that Egyptian information played in this address, no Arab state would have been able to confront its people with any decisions or initiatives on the road to peace in order to solve the problem. The Arab world has been prepared for relevance through the Egyptian strategy, and it has become clear that peace does not mean surrender, that it is not to the detriment of the Arab nation and that it is not permissible to stand in the way of the Egyptian will.

The voice of Egyptian information was loud in its support of its Arab nation and its existential concern. This information has reflected the trust and reality of President Mubarak's policy with regard to his Arab policy without placing a weight on Egyptian will, Egyptian pursuits or strategy on the road to peace. This is the equilibrium which is realized through information.

[Question] We should also not forget that Egypt has opened its arms to Arab artists at all times, and that this is its civilizing message.

[Answer] I consider that Egypt is big and it does not consider the presence of the Arab newspaper as competition for the Egyptian newspaper, the presence of the Arab artist as competition for the Egyptian artist, nor does it consider the presence of Arab production and the Arab program on our television and radio as competition for Egyptian production. Egyptian production is extremely large and plentiful, and all that happens is that whoever comes to Cairo acquires a birth certificate by virtue of civilization, history, thought, the revolution and by virtue of Egyptian culture, and that is why Egypt is the mother of Arabs, open to all Arabs, and would not suddenly abandon its Arab sons, the newspapermen, media persons, artists or those in all the various fields. For this reason the official October celebration had witnessed the presence of Arab artists. Our October celebrations this year are tantamount to a nation's solidarity with itself, recalling in them the great deeds in its life, using them as an incentive to cast off into the future.

[Question] You are accused of being biased in favor of broadcasting, television and data gathering what is your opinion?

[Answer] As I mentioned earlier, I am a political minister, and at the same time, one of the sons of these establishments, having lived in them for years on end.

For this reason I cannot but be biased in their favor. I am biased, for example, in favor of internal information because it was the starting point, I am biased in favor of data gathering because from Aswan to Marsa Matruh, I know everyone in it by name.

From the first telephone worker to office manager, they all seek me out at home without embarrassment to share in solving their problems.

The period of work in the Television and Broadcasting Union was one of a development stage.

The development demanded a semi-permanent presence among the workers in broadcasting and television.

We were living as one family and working as a team. I also believe that the sky that is full of stars is the sky that illuminates, while the one-star sky is dark. You seek that star in it, but do not see it, as any cloud can cover it. No one, however, can cover a great number of stars.

Information leaderships which work together on an equal basis, be they in data gathering or radio and television, constitute a single work team, and these strong ties that gather us all together are the secret of success. This bias in favor of radio and television does not mean, however, that strong ties to the other units do not exist.

[Question] I ask the minister about the secret of his concern with the human being in those units, more than with machinery and implements.

[Answer] Because performance is achieved through the human being, and without him there can be no satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance. When we concern ourselves with the human being, his problems and pains, when we afford him the means to a noble life, he would gladly and willingly devote himself to work.

[Question] I finally ask Minister Safwat al-Sharif about his efforts and about the future. The conversation about these two points became drawn out and this is part of what he said.

[Answer] I am an optimist by nature, do not recognize pessimism, and defeat has never found its way into my heart. I also am confident that through persistence, effort, determination, relevance and the scientific approach, the march will continue without delay or stoppage.

I also believe that the political minister should only be biased in favor of the affairs of his country.

In his ministerial duties he should be nationalist and not a party loyalist: The minister has to be broad-minded politician, and violent criticism or even insults and attacks should be incapable of making him stray from his nationalist path. As long as the aims are clear, and the effort to realize them is kept up, those aims will be realized.

We at the Ministry of Information are marching according to a plan for achieving Egyptian information sovereignty and to further develop radio, television and data gathering.

Let the Egyptian citizen live his epoch, or rather let him live his world.

We are endeavoring to create a third television channel that would realize many of the hopes of our people, as we, together with an international consortium of experts, are attempting to launch an Egyptian satellite into space for the future age of broadcasting and television, since it is incumbent upon ourselves to keep up with our epoch and to realize sovereignty for Egyptian information.

We are also endeavouring to build a city for film and television production that will preserve Egypt's pioneering role in the coming years, or rather, forever. We do [not] at all look under our feet, but rather look up to the sky. If we add to all this that we are working to increase the number of provincial radio stations, since they are the ones that created the environment and the revolution of the epoch in broadcasting. These provincial stations afford the opportunity of participating in decision making. They also discover the talents that exist in the provinces and provide them with the opportunities to appear and develop. Moreover, these non-central stations weld themselves to the masses and experience their problems, offering solutions to all problems on the basis of placing Egyptian interests above all considerations.

Finally, I can only congratulate Minister Safwat al-Sharif for the appreciated efforts that the ministry of information expended during the celebrations for the glorious, immortal October festivities.

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EGYPT

NEW UN AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES ARAB, INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

Cairo AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 22 Jan 85 p 6

[Interview with United Nations Ambassador Ahmad Tawfiq Khalil by Hidayat 'Abd-al-Nabi: "Egypt's Permanent Representative to the United Nations to AL-AHRAM: I Have Said That Egypt Is Always Open to Arab Brothers Because Their Cause Is Our Cause"]

[Text] Last December Egypt chaired the Security Council, the international agency concerned with maintaining international peace and security. Since October 1984, Egypt has been chairing the Group of 77, and will do so for 15 months starting last October. Proceeding from the interest of political leaders in Egypt in the economic dimension of their foreign policy, Egypt, proceeding from its position, is working to maintain and preserve the interests of the Group of 77 (127 of the countries of the third world).

A few days ago Ambassador Ahmad Tawfiq Khalil, Egypt's permanent representative, left Cairo for New York via Geneva in order to attend the meeting of representatives of the Group of 77. A few hours before his departure AL-AHRAM met with him for a lengthy discussion on Egypt's role in the Security Council and the Group of 77.

AL-AHRAM: What is your evaluation of Egypt's chairmanship of the Security Council?

Ahmad Tawfiq Khalil: There is no doubt that a country's chairmanship of the Security Council is a matter of great importance and an unusual event, one that happens once every 20 years. Our most recent membership was from January 1961 to December 1962. The most important issue preoccupying the Security Council at that time was the Cuban missile crisis. Therefore, our chairmanship was a great event; such chairmanship has great status. The Security Council, in 1984, held a number of meetings, 57 in all, 14 of which were on the Middle East. The two issues dealt with in the council while Egypt has been chairing it have been, one, Cyprus and two, South Africa. The two issues have special importance for the third world and Egypt. We worked to convince the parties concerned with the Cyprus issue to calm down their tone in their treatment of the issue before the Security Council, and we succeeded in this to some extent. We succeeded in the vote on a special

resolution prohibiting the export of weapons from South Africa, which was preceded by a number of contacts and unofficial consultations.

What Did We Achieve?

The international emergency forces' term in Cyprus was renewed, and to some extent we succeeded in calming the atmosphere between the conflicting parties.

As regards South Africa, the resolution bearing on the prohibition of the export of weapons from that country was issued unanimously, including the vote of the United States and all the Western countries.

We must not forget that Egypt's chairmanship of the United Nations is restricted to a single month, and our turn in the council did not begin or end with the termination of this chairmanship. For 10 years, Egypt has also had the chairmanship of the Group of 77; Dr 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid, the foreign minister, was Egypt's permanent representative to the United Nations at that time. Our role in the areas of economic development is well known. Here, I am anxious to mention the role of our colleague Wafiq Husni, now director of the Economic Department in the Foreign Ministry.

Today we, that is, the third world, are going through the stage of problems of development. The problems are almost carbon copies of those that exist in all the developing countries common to the Group of 77. The first meeting of third world countries was held in Cairo in 1962. African unanimity in choosing Egypt, embodied in Cairo's position as present chairman, gives proof of the weight and confidence Cairo enjoys, which the African countries place in Egypt. The responsibility here consists of leadership of the third world within the United Nations and coordination within the other groupings of the United Nations. This brings benefit to Egypt in terms of affiliation with a specific bloc of countries. The other countries turn to Egypt for help. Thus we are in a situation where we hold the reins of affairs. In this context, we are working for the sake of the interests of the Group of 77. We have welcomed this chairmanship because it is proof of the countries' confidence in Egypt's leadership and rationality and gives us room for movement. The most important matter facing us now is that of priorities among the developing countries. We are also advancing the subjects of the north and south. In my capacity as chairman of the group in New York, I met with the executive director of the International Monetary Fund, and we talked about the third world countries' indebtedness and other matters which impinge on the developing countries as a group. Here we are talking about the conditions the International Monetary Fund sets out, so that they will be reasonable, acceptable ones regarding loans on easy terms, so that the developing countries' circumstances will be able to cope with them. Proceeding from this premise, there is the chairmanship in the Group of 77, which speaks in the name of all the countries. We are still demanding, for example, comprehensive negotiations, and, in the course of Egypt's current chairmanship, we have to a large extent succeeded in eliminating the atmosphere of confrontation that existed as a result of the stagnation that had come into being.

AL-AHRAM: Through Egypt's chairmanship of the Group of 77, do you feel optimism regarding development efforts in the developing countries?

The chairman of the Group of 77: The development process is faced with a number of major problems. We must be practical. Development cannot be carried out overnight. The process of struggling for the sake of development is a continuous one. Therefore, we have chosen the word "developing countries" to apply to the countries of the third world, because the development process does not stop at any point. It is a continuous process, and if there is a final point to it then the advanced industrial countries have come to a stop. Consequently, there is a sound orientation today, which is that it is necessary to increase cooperation among the developing countries themselves, and therefore it is necessary to exploit the resources available in cooperation among themselves. For example, but not restrictively, Brazil exports cars to Angola. Egypt is working through the African Technical Aid Fund to support this cooperation. It has massive expertise in irrigation, for example. On one of my visits to Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, I found that all the railroad engineers were Egyptians.

AL-AHRAM: Can the Islamic countries achieve anything in this direction, or others?

Ambassador Ahmad Tawfiq Khalil: All groupings concentrate on the development process, and the eyes of the world are on them today to solve economic problems and to solve population problems. Here we can benefit from the population conference which was held in Mexico. The obstacle of colonialism has been eliminated now, and the eyes of peoples are on development. Among the most important achievements of the 39th session of the United Nations were, one, the crisis and tragedy in Africa, and we had an important role in remedying these great problems, and must be proud of Egypt's role in the framework of the Group of 77 (127 countries), and two, the special declaration prohibiting torture, which concerns human rights. Today we find that the basic Egyptian line is founded on the preservation of human rights. While Egypt condemns Israeli practices in occupied Palestinian territories, this condemnation proceeds from the fourth Geneva agreement which has demanded equality in the case of human rights, and Egypt has had an important role in the special declaration prohibiting torture. Egypt, as an African country, has given priority to the problems of drought in Africa in the framework of the dialogue between the north and south, while avoiding the formation of axes among other regional groups.

AL-AHRAM: Could we move over to the Middle East and a view, from the perspective of the United Nations, of your expectations for it in 1985?

[Answer] This question draws us into another question on the role of the United Nations. What is this role? The United Nations is now going through a stage of self-defense. The basic worry comes from some currents in the United States of America. These currents are attacking the United Nations on grounds that it takes positions against the United States.

They explain this through the United Nations' endorsement of the establishment of a new international economic order. This is one of the just demands of the countries of the third world. The same thing applies to the establishment of a new international media system. This also is a just demand. These currents accuse the United Nations of being hostile to Israel.

However, the question is, why this hostility toward Israel? Isn't the reason for that attributable to its policy in the occupied Arab territories? Then why should these currents ignore the United Nations' condemnation of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan?

Though we imagine that the United Nations system can act as if it is an international government, it is no such thing. If we blame it for anything, we must blame ourselves, including the countries of the third world. If we understand that the United Nations cannot be the party offering a solution, but rather is a place where problems are discussed and the attempt is made to calm down and solve them, from that premise we must look at the important issues, foremost among them the Middle East, and we must not forget, either, the African issues that remain. The United Nations is one of the important arenas which we must continue to address. It is one of the few bodies where any country, regardless of its status or size, can address the world and direct the countries of the world to some problem. Countries cannot impose a solution on anyone, but they have specific weight and have a moral responsibility and political pressure, and it is necessary to follow through with this political pressure. If we take an issue such as the international conference, Egypt has supported that notion since it was presented, and Egypt took part in voting on behalf of this resolution. We talked about it and when questions were directed to us within the context of the Security Council, Cairo agreed to participate and welcomed the thought of doing so, proceeding from Egypt's position that we are in favor of any initiative which will guarantee that the situation will be allowed to progress, and this is still our position. However, we must realize that that is not enough for the United Nations or people who defend it to bring us to the desired goal, because as long as there are parties which refuse to participate in this conference, that is, Israel and America, as is well known, we must continue to persuade them that this is the approach which will promise success. We can say that during this session we have succeeded in increasing support for the notion of an international conference to discuss the Palestinian cause and the Middle East.

AL-AHRAM: What has the Palestinian cause achieved within the United Nations in the past few years?

Egypt's permanent representative to the United Nations: We have been able to keep the Palestinian cause among the world's priorities. The United Nations is an important arena for revealing what goes on and drawing the world's attention to the cause.

AL-AHRAM: If you had advice for the Palestinian delegation in the United Nations, what would that advice be?

[Answer] I would like always to distinguish between politics and diplomacy. This question is political, not diplomatic. We tell them, unify statements. It is necessary to clarify your positions, and this clarity will give you the chance to have others listen to you. Egypt's receptiveness to the convening of the Palestinian National Council proceeded from this premise, since the National Council says, "This is what the Palestinians want." When clarity is absent from the Palestinian position, that is reflected in the

organization's representative in New York and elsewhere, because when he talks, he talks in a context in which he has to strike a balance between some orientations and others.

AL-AHRAM: How would you describe the Arab atmosphere now in the United Nations and Egypt's permanent representative's contacts with the other Arab ambassadors, at a time when relations between Egypt and most Arab countries are being reconsolidated?

[Answer] In the context of the United Nations, specifically, everyone feels Egypt's weight, which is clear in New York. Foremost among those who feel this are the Arab countries. As I said, Egypt's being a member of the Security Council and chairman of the Group of 77 is all proof of the confidence which has been placed in Egypt and the whole world's acceptance of Egypt's role. Proceeding from that premise, Egyptian-Arab cooperation has increased, and one of the characteristics of the nature of New York is good personal relationships.

[Question] Is it possible then to describe coordination and cooperation between Egypt and the ambassadors? [What about] the Sudan?

[Answer] Superb. We are joined together in an integrated context.

[Question] And Jordan?

[Answer] Coordination is now much greater, following the resumption of diplomatic relations, and Ambassador 'Abdallah Salah, the former foreign minister of Jordan and its present representative to the United Nations, knows many people in Egypt. Foremost among those he knows is Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, the minister of foreign affairs.

[Question] Between Egypt and Iraq?

[Answer] Coordination exists and is excellent. In the course of this session we have even succeeded in having the Iraqi delegation now become receptive to some of our views regarding drafts of resolutions on which we differed, on their behalf.

[Question] And the countries of the Gulf?

[Answer] Coordination is excellent. I have personal friendships with their permanent representatives.

[Question] And us and Saudi Arabia?

[Answer] Coordination is excellent, to the point where AL-AHRAM published the statement by Ambassador al-Shihabi on the Palestinian cause and I gave him a copy of AL-AHRAM.

[Question] And Algeria?

[Answer] Our relations are good, praise God, in particular regarding the issues of cooperation among peoples in the context of the Group of 77.

[Question] And Morocco?

[Answer] The same thing applies to Morocco. Although Morocco had some criticisms of Egypt's vote in favor of the Algerian plan regarding the Western Sahara, we described our position to them frankly.

[Question] And Lebanon?

[Answer] We cooperate night and day with people outside Egypt who open their hearts to Lebanon in the Security Council. Egypt is the Arab member of the council and coordination exists. Egypt's heart is open to all our Arab brothers and it supports them in their causes, because they are our causes.

[Question] Therefore coordination with all countries is superb, except for two.

[Answer] I believe that coordination exists directly and indirectly with all Arab countries. Examples of Arab coordination are the agreement to a special resolution that the Middle East should be free of nuclear weapons, to which no one objected, then the secretary general's demand that contacts be made in this regard. In the framework of the United Nations, almost all criticism of Egypt has been eliminated. In spite of what is happening outside the United Nations, there is absolutely no criticism of Egypt at all now in the halls and meetings of the international organization.

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CSO: 4504/213

EGYPT

CALL TO BOYCOTT SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES WITH ISRAEL

Cairo AL-MUWAJAHAH in Arabic No 3, Oct-Nov 85 p 142

[Text] It is truly sad that a few Egyptian professors continue to participate in (scholarly) conferences held in Israel, or to visit there under the claim of scholarship, development, or something else. Because of this, the Committee for the Defense of National Culture believes it necessary to call upon these professors to boycott any cooperative work with Israel, on the basis of Egyptian patriotism, Arab nationalism, human principles and even scholarly truths.

The justification of joint activity with Israel under the pretext of science is a false justification, for the Israeli professors and scholars are not far removed from the Israeli military machine, or from racist Zionist politics. Rather--completely to the contrary--they are participating actively by their scholarship in developing the Israeli instrument of destruction, just as they are defending with their minds this inhuman racist regime which has come to impose its will and its supremacy on the Arab nation, including Egypt. It is significant in this context to know that the minister of scientific research in Israel is currently one of the most extremist ministers in the government of Israel.

Certainly, the participation of any Egyptian in any activity--no matter what its type--in Israel or in Egypt is a violation of the simplest national principles which enjoin noncooperation with Israel as an enemy, because it still occupies Taba and still continues to threaten Egypt with intervention and reoccupation of the Sinai should Egypt withdraw from the framework which was prescribed by Israel.

Also, this participation is a violation of the principles of Arab brotherhood, since the Israeli forces which occupied Lebanon and destroyed it and killed thousands of its people and the Palestinian people still entrenched there. Israeli crimes are innumerable; from the attack against the Iraqi nuclear reactor, to annexing east Jerusalem and declaring it the unified capital of Israel, to annexing the Golan, to persecution of Arab citizens in the occupied Palestinian territory by various means, and so on, to aggression against churches, mosques and Jerusalem.

This participation is a blow to the simplest human values, because Zionism bears responsibility for a number of crimes against humanity. Since the massacre of Dayr Yasin and Sabra and Shatila, children and old men have been massacred and sacred things and places desecrated. Finally, such participation is an obvious violation of the consensus of Egyptian professors and all the associations and patriotic organizations which have emphasized, in conference decisions, calls of members of teaching organizations in Egyptian universities to boycott Israel and to halt the trend of scholarly and cultural normalization with the Zionist enemy.

We feel that a boycott of any cooperative activity with Israel is the least we are able to contribute to the service of our nation--small and large--and its citizens.

Finally, we reiterate the call to a boycott, and to those who have been misled by Zionist pretensions to return to their principles of patriotism and humanity.

[Signed] Committee for the Defense of National Culture 5 March 1984

12780

CSO: 4504/190

EGYPT

ECONOMIC ROLE OF PORT SA'ID DISCUSSED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 23 Dec 84 p 23

[Article by Muhammad Rashad 'At'ut, general manager of the Bank of Egypt:
"Port Sa'id: Free Production City"]

[Text] Port Sa'id, the free city, has been subjected to successive waves of harsh attacks that allege that it creates a crack in the country's economic structure.

The transformation of Port Sa'id into a free city was not a political decision. Rather, it came as an objective approach to tackle the city's economic problems and as a balm to sooth its wounds after long years of hardship and suffering.

The calls for reducing the free city are based on the following negative points:

1. Harm to local production, especially textile and ready-made clothing production.
2. Increase in the inventories of unsalable commodities in the public sector companies.
3. Drain on the savings of Egyptians working abroad.
4. Cause of the uncontrollable rise in the price of the dollar, considering that all the sedative measures have failed to curb this rise.
5. The city has aggravated smuggling and the loss of enormous sums of money owed to the country in taxes.

Aside from the free city's social, economic and security impact and the extent of its contribution to the national development, there is no doubt that the city has protected society from the parasitic markets surrounding us. The wave of consumption activity has begun to recede to its natural dimensions and to be replaced by open-door production. The city is developing naturally in the direction of production.

Here, a persistent and specific question comes up:

What is the volume of the trade of Port Sa'id, the free city, in comparison to the volume of the republic's imports?

Statistically, the value of the total textile and ready-made clothing imports arriving in Port Sa'id is estimated to be 80 million pounds a year whereas the value of the republic's imports is estimated to be 600 million pounds. Port Sa'id's average annual imports of all commodities amount to 200 million pounds whereas the public sector's unsalable inventory amounts to 4.5 billion pounds.

If the targeted remittances of Egyptians working abroad amount to \$4 billion, then it is assumed that Port Sa'id takes \$200 million out of this sum.

With stable economic policies, in the presence of a declared currency market and of a prohibition on the banks from dealing with foreign currency, either selling or buying, it has been possible to curtail speculation and the rise and fluctuation in foreign currency prices and to attract more of the savings of Egyptians working abroad. The free city of Port Sa'id does not drain the foreign currency market. Rather, the city's commercial and industrial activities are considered a source of such currency.

The number of visitors frequenting Port Sa'id each year is estimated to be 7 million people. The customs fees collected at the city's portals are estimated to be more than 20 million pounds a year. These purchases by Egyptians visiting Port Sa'id cannot be compared with the volume of goods brought by Egyptians by way of Cairo Airport, Alexandria Port and other sites where every passenger enjoys a customs exemption of almost 100 pounds. This is in addition to the sales of the Egyptian Free Markets Company which are estimated to be nearly 30 million pounds a year.

The revenues of the commercial and industrial profits tax have increased in the free city of Port Sa'id more than 20 times over what they were in 1976. Moreover, the importation of easy-to-smuggle goods has been streamlined automatically. Smuggling is, in any case, a normal phenomenon in the various ports, airports and free zones in Egypt and the world.

National Capital

With the return of Port Sa'id's inhabitants after the evacuation, a booster shot was needed to revive the city's life and to enable the city to secure national capital at the highest and fastest rates. Commercially, the city has achieved this objective, economic balance is inevitably coming to the city and the law of supply and demand is the master of it.

There are goods sold at a price below their import cost. No fair person can deny that the previous experience, with its shortcomings and its positive and negative points, was urgently needed and that the accumulated capital of the commercial activity has found its way toward industry and tourism in the free city of Port Sa'id. This will ultimately provide us with an endless source of foreign currencies that serve not just the interest of Port Sa'id

but the welfare and prosperity of all of Egypt. The free city is a vital requirement for Port Sa'id's life. What is the alternative? A Port Sa'id in constant economic decline and a Port Sa'id heading for a bleak future while the ports around it are being developed, industries are being set up and free cities and tourist cities are being built.

It is our duty to focus on developing the importation of investment goods, raw materials, production requirements, craftsmen and all the commodities required by the nature of Port Sa'id's position as the biggest supply station and transit zone on the Mediterranean Sea and as a strategic warehouse, an international fair and an international market for the needs of the state, of the citizens and of the countries around us and, now, for the ships crossing the Suez Canal. We save marketing expenses through direct contracts with the companies operating in the free zone and we eliminate middlemen, commission agents and those who manipulate prices at the expense of the quality of the goods.

We must encourage and support the industrial projects, supply them with the infrastructures, the services and the utilities they need and facilitate the customs and investment procedures and the method of dealing between the free zone's industrial projects and the other parts of the republic.

After the war, Japan raised the slogan of "exports or death." It behooves us to devote attention to secure the resources and enhance the export capability of Port Said and to exert efforts to develop the ship-supply, and transit trades and to deal with the causes of their decline. In 1937, the volume of transit trade amounted to 1,675,000 tons, dropped to 947,000 tons in 1947 and crashed to 125,000 tons in 1957. We must find out the reasons for the success and superiority of other ports which emerged after Port Said in order to determine the system and pattern of our actions.

Uncontrollable Tourism

We find it our duty, rather the primary national duty not just of Port Said but of all of Egypt, to curtail the consumption of luxuries which has exceeded all bounds, to reconsider objectively the uncontrollable tourism to the outside world which is not compatible with our current economic resources and to put controls on the movement of foreign currency to the outside world.

The free city of Port Sa'id requires hard and tireless efforts, planned development and constant evaluation bolstered by the effort and solidarity of all the loyal sons of Egypt to achieve the desired open-door production. Protecting and polishing the experiment and correcting its course are tantamount to protecting the open-door production policy of all of Egypt.

On God we rely in seeking our path.

8494

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EGYPT

NEW CITIES DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS DISCUSSED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 24 Jan 85 p 5

[Interview with Engineer Hasballah al-Kafrawi, Egyptian minister of reconstruction, by 'Abd-al-Karim Salim, Ahmad Charib, and Ahmad Husayn: "5,500 Egyptian Pounds Per Apartment Next 6 October: Loans to the Northern Coastline Cooperatives at 8 Percent Interest"; date and place of interview not specified]

[Text] The cooperative lands in the two cities of 6 October and 15 May receive utilities.

New towns and villages receive residents for the first time this year.

This gentleman [Engineer Hasballah al-Kafrawi] is in charge of realizing the dream that the inhabitants of Cairo have to escape overcrowding and congestion, as well as the dream that the population of Egypt generally has to spread out beyond the narrow strip of land represented by the Nile valley.

His areas of responsibility, as indicated by the name of his ministry, are reconstruction, new communities, and land reclamation, and they constitute the future of Egypt as a whole.

In spite of the enormity of his responsibility, Mr al-Kafrawi--quite realistically--is promising that during this year alone he will be providing people with part of this great dream which they wish to see realized, that is, new towns and villages as well as apartments with very low rent levels.

The following is the text of the interview which we held with Mr al-Kafrawi:

[Question] In a statement to the press you said that the year 1985 was going to be the year of reconstruction. What did you mean by that?

[Answer] This year will witness the birth of some great projects. It will witness the birth of the village of Maraqiyah, the village of Tut 'Ankh Amun, and the village of Sant Katrin [Saint Catherine], and the city of 6 October--God willing--will be receiving its first residents who will have the city listed as their address in their identity cards.

The Upper Egypt Branch

[Question] What is the significance of having a new branch of the Ministry of Reconstruction in Upper Egypt?

[Answer] The fact is that, when the regional conference of the southern governorates of Upper Egypt requested the creation of a body from the Ministry of Reconstruction for the supervision of the land reclamation and new communities projects and when this recommendation was brought to the attention of the prime minister, the prime minister immediately agreed to this. I am very happy about this, both as a citizen and as an official in the government, because I see that people have begun to see the importance of the role played by central planning.

The Story Concerning Fish

[Question] Are there still problems with increasing the deliveries of fish from Lake Nasser? Why are the residents of Cairo and some of the towns of Upper Egypt not receiving fish from this lake?

[Answer] Lake Nasser cannot meet the requirements of 47 million inhabitants. It is merely one of our sources of fish, and is not the only source in the country. We began our work in conjunction with Lake Nasser in 1978. When we took over the management of Lake Nasser, its production capacity was 14,000 tons of fish per year. There was also a report from the Food and Agricultural Organization which said that the highest possible production capacity of Lake Nasser was 30,000 tons of fish per year.

We then worked on the development of the lake and, through our own efforts, brought its production up to 35,000 tons of fish per year--that is, more than what the Food and Agricultural Organization had estimated as being its highest possible production capacity. Then we enlisted the aid of Japanese experts and set up a fish resources center. The studies made by this research center have said that Lake Nasser's production could be as high as 80,000 tons of fish per year, and we have begun planning to attain this production figure.

The problem is that we do not constitute the only factor influencing the outcome in this matter. Pricing, for example, is something which is beyond our control. We set up villages for fishermen and we provided for the social welfare needs of the fishermen and their families. But when a fisherman sees that an agricultural worker in his village is earning up to 6 Egyptian pounds per day while he himself is earning only 2 Egyptian pounds per day, then he will, of course, give up fishing.

This is, in fact, what happened. The number of fishermen working in Lake Nasser went down from 7,000 to 2,500, and the result of this was that the lake's production went down to 25,000 tons of fish per year.

We were able to raise the wages of the fishermen to 4 and 5 Egyptian pounds per day. This has been a big jump in wages, but the wages must be increased even more.

Land Auctions Are Continuing

[Question] They say that auctions for selling off government lands are contributing toward the rise in land prices, both in the case of agricultural land and land for construction. Is there any plan to eliminate these auctions?

[Answer] Not at all. The auctions are continuing. As long as supply is less than demand, there must exist a legitimate means of satisfying a portion of the demand. This practice is followed everywhere in the world. Auctions are something which give everyone an equal chance to make a purchase. Whoever can pay the most or can offer the best conditions is the person who makes the purchase.

[Question] How about in the new communities?

[Answer] We are selling land there at less than cost. The cost of each square meter of land in the new communities is 54 Egyptian pounds. Included in the cost of each square meter of land is the cost of a school, a hospital, a social club, a police station, a court building, a water treatment plant, electricity, sewage, roads, etc. Nevertheless, we are selling each square meter of land for 30 Egyptian pounds in the city of 10 Ramadan and the city of 6 October, and we are selling each square meter of land for only 10 Egyptian pounds in the city of al-Sadat and the city of al-'Amiriyah.

President Mubarak feels that 30 Egyptian pounds per square meter is a big sum of money, and the prime minister agrees with him concerning this. I made the proposal that, in order for us to reduce the price, the government should assume the costs of the main utilities instead of having them be paid for by the citizens purchasing the land. President Mubarak and the prime minister both agreed to this proposal. I have prepared a memorandum dealing with this matter, and it will be discussed and debated by the Policies Committee.

How Can We Prevent Speculation?

[Question] What do al-Nubariyah, 'Arab al-Nubariyah, and the area east of the canal mean to Egypt?

[Answer] They represent a victory, a conquest, great hope, and a bright future for Egypt.

[Question] But where are the fruits and vegetables produced by these areas, and when will the residents of Cairo be seeing them?

[Answer] Very soon.

[Question] They say that some investors who have purchased land in these areas have purposely not utilized the land because they are interested in speculating with it. How can this be prevented?

[Answer] In the case of the land meant for construction in the new cities, it is possible for me to provide a solution. I could provide the land, for

nominal prices, to persons working within the city and could not allow them to sell or otherwise dispose of the land until there has been construction on the land or until a certain period of time has gone by. But in the case of agricultural land and reclaimed land, the land must be sold by means of auctions or having people draw lots.

[Question] How can one insure that the owners of these lands comply with this policy when evaluating the results [concerning how they have disposed of their lands]?

[Answer] We have issued Law No 143 of 1981 dealing with fallow and desert lands. Also, we have two laws dealing with land reclamation and with [such lands] as resources for utilization in the new cities. Furthermore, we have Law No 3 of 1981 dealing with urban planning.

The most important thing stipulated by these laws is that the holders of the land must be serious about utilizing the land, and if a period of 3 years has gone by without them having demonstrated that they are serious about utilizing the land, the land is then taken away from them.

Problems of the Investors

[Question] They say that, in the case of the production projects in the city of 10 Ramadan, where the period of grace as far as taxes are concerned has already ended, production began to decrease when the taxes began to be paid. What about this?

[Answer] I do not think so. Would a factory owner purposely keep his income down in order not to pay taxes?

[Question] Are the investors confronted with great problems in the city of 10 Ramadan at the present time?

[Answer] We are helping the investors to overcome many of their problems. The ministry is backing them when they deal with the Customs Administration because they are exempt from paying customs duties and they are exempt from taxes for a period of 10 years. This period still has not ended.

Work Opportunities in Sinai

[Question] What do you say to young people who want to work in Sinai?

[Answer] This is a national duty. However, in order to get people interested in working there, it is not enough to merely tell them that it is their national duty. One must provide better work opportunities, better housing, and a better life there. This is what we are trying to do right now. We have managed to have an additional 12,000 faddans of land cultivated in Sinai, and this is a great achievement. We will continue with our efforts in the area east of the canal as well as in the al-Qa' plain and the al-'Arish plain until we have 42,000 faddans of land under cultivation. These lands will be

distributed to new residents and families there. Then we will do the same thing with the al-Tinah plain in the northwestern part of Sinai, and this is a large area.

[Question] What opportunities do Egyptian investors have in Sinai?

[Answer] Many people have already begun to actually engage in agriculture east of the canal and in the al-'Arish area. Furthermore, private sector companies have begun to engage in tourism and individuals have begun engaging in fishing there. Small companies have begun to form in al-Bardawil and al-'Utur. But we are still expecting more activity to take place there. Do not forget that we began to be active in Sinai only 3 years ago. This is not a long enough period of time to attract the private sector, because the private sector is very careful about where it invests its money. But in general we can report numerous achievements, among which are the following:

1. The Ra's Sudr summer resort and Sant Katrin [Saint Catherine] which will open within a few weeks. Also, Ra's Muhammad has been equipped with cafeterias. Furthermore, the al-Tur coastline has been planted with palm trees like the al-'Arish coastline.
2. We have been working in Sharm al-Shaykh and Nuwayba' for the last 2 years, and gigantic enterprises in this area are going to come into being.
3. We have prepared a special encyclopedia dealing with Sinai which contains all the information written about the Sinai Peninsula. This was done because we began our work there without having any information available about Sinai.
4. We have finished with our study for the Hammamat Fir'aun [Pharaoh's Baths] project where there are hot springs containing sulphur water whose temperature is 75 degrees centigrade and which are suitable for treating rheumatism.

[Question] Does your ministry or the Sinai Development Agency have a map which businessmen can use to become acquainted with the locations where it would be suitable for them to set up their enterprises, whether the enterprises are agricultural projects, commercial enterprises, industrial enterprises, or tourism enterprises?

[Answer] Right now there is no such map. But I can promise you that I will have such a map made and that it will be distributed free of charge to people who visit Sinai and that copies of it will be distributed to the Investment Authority, the Information Bureau, and all parties concerned. This is something which really constitutes a national duty.

Apartments in the City of 15 May

[Question] They say that, in spite of all the fanfare that has been heard about the new cities and the huge amounts of money that are being spent on them, only the two cities of 10 Ramadan and 15 May have come into existence so far. They say that the latter city suffers from a lack of means of

transportation and water service, that there are cracks in the walls of the buildings there, and that there are leaks in its sewage system. What about all this?

[Answer] There are no cracks in the walls of the buildings in the city of 15 May. However, throughout Egypt there are people whom we could call "killjoys," who feel that it is their job to decry all the efforts that are being made and to provide people with a false picture of the situation. We had a group of professors and students from the University of Sheffield in England, as well as a group of professors and students from the Faculty of Fine Arts from the University of Hulwan, who visited the city of 15 May and had high praise for it.

In general, I am prepared [to challenge anyone who says negative things about the new cities]. Any person who can show me that his house has cracks in its walls will, in such a case, have proven that I am wrong. It is sufficient to mention the fact that dynamite and explosives are being used in the quarries around the city, and have been used since the first day of its existence, and this has not damaged any of the buildings. What this means is that the buildings have been very solidly built.

I should point out that a total of only 600 million Egyptian pounds have been spent on the new cities so far, and this amount is no more than a third of the cost of the utilities in Greater Cairo.

[Question] Why have the lands of the cooperatives alongside the cities of 15 May, 6 October, and al-'Ubur not yet been transferred to the parties due to receive them?

[Answer] I am the one who has delayed the transfer of these lands because I have not had enough financial resources to provide water and sewage systems for these lands. When I transfer these lands to the people due to receive them, I want them to be completely provided with the necessary utilities. This is why I have insisted on not transferring the lands and this is why I have been putting pressure on myself and my colleagues. It would be very easy for me to simply take a map and today transfer these lands to the parties due to receive them, but would I be a responsible person if I did this?

The Transfer Will Take Place This Year

[Question] Exactly when will the transfer of these lands take place?

[Answer] I hope that I will have provided the lands of the cities of 6 October and 15 May with utilities before the end of this year. In the case of the city of al-'Ubur, however, there has been some delay because there is a difference in the points of view held by our ministry and the armed forces.

[Question] What has been the benefit of having the city of 6 October or the city of al-Sadat?

[Answer] I consider the city of 6 October to be a large and beautiful suburb of the city of Cairo. However, its main feature is that it is self-sufficient with regard to all of its services and utilities. The city of al-Sadat is an independent industrial city, as is the city of 10 Ramadan. It will begin issuing announcements about itself this year after it is linked to the central Delta area. The distance between Shabin al-Kum, in the heart of the Delta, and the city of al-Sadat will be a distance that can be covered in only 25 minutes.

5,500 Egyptian Pounds Per Apartment

[Question] What is the situation with regard to the low-cost housing in the city of 6 October, and when will this housing be finished?

[Answer] We are working on this housing right now. I hope that I will be able to hand it over to the government by next 6 October. The price per apartment in this housing development will be only 5,500 Egyptian pounds.

[Question] When will the circular highway around Cairo be finished?

[Answer] We are still in the early stages of this work. We have 3 more years of work to do on it, assuming that all of the necessary resources will be available.

[Question] What will this highway mean for the average citizen?

[Answer] It will mean big changes for Cairo. Some of the older areas of the city will be renovated, their streets will be widened, and their utilities will be improved. Some small suburban areas will be built up around this circular highway, and some of the industries which are inside the city of Cairo right now will be relocated to these areas.

Port Sa'id Has Kept Me Very Busy

[Question] What is the significance of the Heliopolis [Misr al-Jadida]-Hulwan highway?

[Answer] Thank God, this highway is almost finished. Our deadline for having it built all the way to Hulwan is 30 June 1986. The most difficult thing about building this road has been the bridges in the al-Muqattam area. This road will alleviate the traffic which goes to and comes from Upper Egypt.

[Question] And what about the new Damietta [Dumyat] port?

[Answer] This is the hope of all Egyptians and all the residents of Damietta in particular. Damietta was the only port in Egypt before [the time of the Arabs' conquest of Egypt by] 'Amr ibn-al-'As. It served its purpose until the opening of the Suez Canal. When this new port is opened, it will greatly alleviate the burden shouldered by the ports of Alexandria and Port Sa'id.

[Question] They say that you are really looking out for the interests of Port Sa'id. Is this true?

[Answer] Port Sa'id really has kept me busy ever since the time of its reconstruction after the Tripartite Aggression against Egypt in 1956. Right now a study is being conducted which deals with expanding the port at Port Sa'id and adding more wharves for containers. This will mean that Port Sa'id will have more business and activity. My interest in this activity stems from my duty to the nation as a whole and my patriotic feelings toward the whole country, and it is not an expression of any local or regional patriotism.

Loans for the Cooperatives

[Question] What role has the Ministry of Reconstruction played with regard to helping the cooperatives on the northern coastline set up their villages?

[Answer] A total of 15 housing cooperatives have actually started construction on the northern coastline. Right now I am making efforts to provide cooperative loans to these cooperatives, and these loans will be low-interest loans. Their interest rate will be 8 percent annually, and the loans will be for a 10-year period.

The ministry has already set up the basic utilities such as the water and sewage systems, roads, and electricity along the northern coastline, and right now the final touches are being put on these utilities. The cooperatives have had to pay only 2 Egyptian pounds per square meter for the land utilized.

Incentives for the Engineers

[Question] Engineers are leaving the Ministry of Reconstruction and the Ministry of Housing because their work there is continually being hampered by government regulations. The result of this has been less technical supervision for construction operations. What do you have to say about this?

[Answer] For years now I have been calling for incentives to be provided to engineers and also for having proper work be assigned to them. I have even drawn up a bill dealing with this. The matter was looked into for some time, and it will be brought up again in order that the proper incentives be provided for the engineers whose services we need.

The Wadi Kurkur Story

[Question] For years Wadi Kurkur was on everyone's mind, but then the project vanished. Why?

[Answer] The project did not vanish. The Wadi Kurkur story began when the late President al-Sadat demanded that the area extending from the High Dam at Aswan till Wadi Halfa--a distance of 350 kilometers--undergo urban development. Before this area was developed, the only living creatures there were a few wanderers and hyenas in addition to about 50 or 60 individuals at Abu Simbal who were there for receiving and taking care of tourists who came there.

The development of an area means reclaiming an area's land. When I do my work, I do it step by step. When an area is cultivated, I then move on to another area. I began with the establishment of six small villages in an area totalling about 2,000 faddans. They are the villages of (Astur), (Adandan), al-Sadat, (Kalabishah), al-Salam, Jurf Husayn, and Kurkur.

We started agriculture in these villages, and it was successful. But then the years of the drought came, the water level in the lake next to the dam went down about 20 meters, and as a result of this agriculture in this area was stopped.

But the people living in these villages have started searching for water because they are private sector people who received land and housing there. Some of the lands there are now being cultivated with the help of ground water.

The Greatest Years of My Life

Incidentally, I would like to mention the fact that the High Dam has protected Egypt from the drought which has hit this part of the world. I am happy to say that I spent 10 years working at the High Dam and these were the greatest years of my life. My greatest teachers were Engineer Sidqi Sulayman and Engineer Zaki Qinawi.

9468

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EGYPT

PROBLEMS OF PRIVATE SECTOR TEXTILE INDUSTRY EXAMINED

Cairo AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 26 Dec 84 p 4

[Article by 'Abdallah Nassar and Hani Salih: "Where Are Yarn and Textile Industries Heading; Minister of Industry: New Yarn Price To Be Applied Gradually as of January; Mill Owners: Increase Rate Is Big and Sudden and We Demand Adjustment of Operation Cost"]

[Text] Eng Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab, the minister of industry, has decided to implement the new price for yarn, increasing this price gradually as of the beginning of January within the framework of a plan to sell yarn at an economic price--a plan to go into effect next July.

The owners of yarn and textile plants in Shubra al-Khaymah protested the new rate of increase and its timing, since the increase was announced during a period of stagnation in the textile market and of increased inventories in the public and private sectors. The plant owners touched off a number of problems accumulated in the yarn and textile sectors for years.

Dr al-Sayyid Dahmush, the head of the Yarn Authority, answered the plant owners by saying that the issue of stored inventory is a problem in the public sector also, that unifying the price of yarn depends the black market, that the shares allotted for one plant will go to another and that plant owners can engage in dialogue and discussion at the Yarn Trade Chamber.

AL-JUMHURIYAH interviewed plant owners in Shubra al-Khaymah. What do they say? What does the head of the Yarn Authority and what do the authority experts say and what does the minister of industry say about the problems that have surfaced in the interviews with them?

Objection to Timing

Dr Muhammad al-Sahrajti, a plant owner, said: We do not object to raising yarn prices in principle. But we do object to the rate of increase and to the timing. The plants are not prepared to absorb this increase under the current conditions from which the market suffers, namely the stagnant sales of textiles and the invasion of imports. Yarn production is not enough and this is the reason for the black market.

Al-Sahrajti added: We demand that we be permitted to import mixed yarns so that we may be able to elevate the standard of the ready-made clothing industry and to produce new varieties of textiles demanded by the consumer.

Decline in Yarn Industry

Hafiz Bashir, the owner of a plant in Shubra al-Khaymah, said that there are numerous problems facing the yarn industry, which has declined to a poor condition. Therefore, we cannot pay the proper wages and cannot recruit new workers. All the workers we have are older than 45 years and they are the ones who cannot emigrate.

The fact is that the successive decisions by the Public Sector Yarn Authority, the interest rates collected by the banks and the heads of the public-sector yarn and textile companies are the main reasons behind the decline in the yarn industry.

Bashir added: We don't know what the Yarn Authority wants. If there were a clear policy, nobody would reject it. But this policy consists of conflicting decisions. Are there among the authorized officials, who create the problems, some who will come forth and solve these problems? All we want is an invitation for dialogue with the Ministry of Industry and the Yarn Authority. We want to know our rights and our obligations, and the actual cost for every variety must be set. The market is suffering from stagnation due to the unequal competition with the imports and with the public sector and the reductions this sector offers for the textiles it produces. Moreover, the consuming public sector companies refuse to deal with us.

Private Sector Relies on Public Sector

Rashad Mahmud 'Awdah, the owner of a plant in Shubra al-Khaymah, said: The private sector's yarn industry relies largely on the public sector. We demand that the public sector's yarn segment be strengthened because this is in the interest of the private sector. The public sector must produce high-quality goods at lower prices.

'Awdah added that the private sector contributes 80 percent of the popular textile production. But the head of the Public Sector Yarn Authority has resorted to producing some of these textiles in the public sector to utilize so-called idle capacity. Is it reasonable to produce low-price textiles on the public sector's new and modern looms? Why aren't these looms utilized to produce high-quality textiles that compete with the imports? The idle capacity is due to the fact that the public sector is incapable of producing high-quality textiles. The private sector has been cooperating with the public sector since 1964 (for nearly 20 years) according to the so-called allotment system. Then somebody comes to tell us: Rely on yourselves all at once. How can this be done? The resources available to the public sector are not available to us. Moreover, the operation costs approved in 1982 are no longer convenient due to the rise in costs as a result of the successive increases in wages, salaries, indirect costs and raw materials. We demand a minimum limit of stability. Even the public sector companies deliver the

yarn to us in packaging that causes a high rate of loss and damage. What is surprising is that the yarn companies have increased the prices of yarn in convoluted and hidden ways. This is in addition to the increase that has been announced. If there is a need for an increase, then this increase should be related to the sale price in 1980 and not to the price of 5 December 1984, when the increase in 1 year amounted to 40 percent.

Other Problems

Rashad 'Awdah said: We are suffering from other problems, not just yarn prices. These problems include taxes, the securing of foreign currency and power outages. We have idle plants and plants operating at less than full capacity because they receive raw materials on the basis of the 1964 allotment, i.e., the allotment of 20 years ago.

Six Major Problems

'Abd-al-Wahhab 'Abdallah Ahmad al-Sharqawi, chairman of the Executive Council of the [Yarn Industry] Association and member of the Yarn Industry Chamber's Executive Council, said that the yarn industry is facing six major problems, namely:

1. The rise in yarn prices.
2. The problems in operating for the public sector.
3. The power outages.
4. Tax accounting.
5. Insurance costs.
6. The shortage of skilled labor.

Al-Sharqawi said: We recognize the need for increasing yarn prices. But the timing is inconvenient because we are suffering from accumulated inventories. This puts us, both the public and private sectors, on an unequal footing with imports.

He added that the Yarn Authority chairman has asked the public sector companies to deal only with sister public sector firms insofar as textiles not subject to supply pricing are concerned, even if the prices offered by the private sector are lower. Do such conditions permit us to survive? Even though the private sector plants are capable of supplying good-quality textiles at lower prices, a black market has developed in the yarn industry because of the multiplicity of prices and the shortages. Moreover, we cannot obtain the needed yarn weights. A black market has also emerged because of the conflicting decrees.

New Increase Expected

The chairman of the Cooperative Association of Yarn Mill Owners in Shubra al-Khaymah added: We have met with the ministers of industry and of administrative development and found them to be aware of the circumstances of the yarn and textile plants in Shubra al-Khaymah. The minister of industry promised to apply the increase in yarn prices gradually as of the beginning of the

coming month of January. He promised to do so in two stages, with the second stage coming in July 1985.

The current increase amounts to 22 percent, of which 10 percent will be applied as of 1 January 1985 and 12 percent as of 1 July 1985. This is in addition to a third increase which is being prepared and which is on the way.

We Demand Meeting with Prime Minister

Al-Sharqawi added: We demand a meeting with the prime minister so that we may deal with the yarn industry in nearly 1,000 private sector plants in Shubra al-Khaymah alone and 2,000 plants in Samnud and al-Mahallah al-Kubra. We need to deal with the problems of raw materials, taxes, insurance, interest rates for loans and the problem of exports.

Plants on Auction

Rashad 'Awdah, Hafiz Bashir and 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Sharqawi said: We demand a fact-finding committee to investigate the conditions of the plants. If we cannot obtain a guarantee for the survival of these plants, we will auction them off.

In al-Mazini plant, there are 24 idle machines because of the unavailability of cotton. The owner used to rely on merchants to secure his needs. Muhibb al-Mazini, the plant owner, said that the plant was built in 1959 and that shares were allocated for it in 1963 and 1973. He added: But I decided to purchase my yarn from the merchants and this is why I don't get enough yarn. I have 24 idle machines and each machine costs 4,000 pounds at least. Isn't this idle capital?

Reducing Price of Raw Materials

Muhammad 'Abd-al-Ghani, the chairman of the plant's union committee, said: The yarn and textile workers in Shubra al-Khaymah plants call for reconsidering the prices of raw materials, especially of yarn, because the current prices will lead to the closing of a number of plants and to the unemployment of workers. We are apprehensive about the future.

Minister of Industry: We Will Apply Economic Price for Yarn

AL-JUMHURIYAH presented the complaints of the owners of yarn and textile plants in Shubra al-Khaymah to Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab, the minister of industry, who said that the price will be applied gradually as of January until the economic price is reached.

The minister left the other major problems undiscussed, expressed reservations about answering them and did not provide decisive answers for them. These problems are:

The inadequate production of cotton yarn, as proven by the fact that some plants operate one shift and other plants are idle.

The decline in the quality of the local cotton yarn which affects the quality of the final product.

The question of why the exportation of ready-made clothing and of textiles is confined to the public sector and of why the private sector is not given a chance in this regard.

The mixed local yarns have failed to achieve the desired quality. So why isn't the importation of yarns permitted so that the local production may attain the standards that permit the manufacture of good clothing that can compete with the imports?

The private sector plant owners say that their experience in contracting with the industrial sector companies to provide the production requirements is an abortive and bitter experience and that these companies come up with excuses and procrastinate in delivering the contracted materials.

Moreover, the shares allotted the plants were set in 1966. Is it reasonable to maintain the same shares for the current production capacities?

Yarn Authority Chairman Replies

Dr al-Sayyid Dahmush, chairman of the Public Sector Yarn and Textile Authority, said: We permit them to import cotton yarns from wherever they wish. But we do not permit the importation of mixed yarns.

The purpose of unifying the yarn price is to deal with the black market. The problem is that plant owners are angry because they will not have enough yarn stored before the decision is applied. The multiplicity of prices is the actual cause behind the emergence of the black market, and this is something that we will not permit.

In response to the plant owners' call for dialogue with the Ministry of Industry and with the authority on the deterioration in the yarn and textile industries and on dealings with this deterioration, Dr Dahmush said that the Yarn and Textile Chamber of the Union of Egyptian Industries is already doing this and that it meets and discusses the issues without any restrictions.

In response to the plant owners' complaint regarding the inadequacy of the shares distributed to the plants, Dr Dahmush, the Yarn Authority chairman, said: The shares might not be enough. If the production increases, there will be an abundance of yarn. We are exerting efforts to achieve this goal. But can we increase the share of one plant to the exclusion of another at present? Any increase in the share of one plant will be taken from the share of another plant.

Responding to the complaint of plant owners about the increase in the unsold inventory of textiles and of the difficulty of marketing these textiles in the face of the reductions offered by the public sector for its production, Dr Dahmush said: The private sector's costs are high. The public sector companies have unsold stores from the past 4 years. Should these stores remain

in the warehouses? Yes, we do offer these stores at reduced prices to market them. But their, meaning the private sector plants', problem is that their costs are high, so they demand that the public sector raise its prices. We do so for some products.

Responding to a question on the timing of the increase in yarn prices during a period of market stagnation and of lack of demand for local textiles and clothing, Dr Dahmush said: This is a problem that faces the public sector also. We suffer from smuggling and from nearly 3 million Egyptians working abroad. This means that at least 3 million Egyptians get their clothing made of imported cloth.

Responding to a question on the refusal of the consuming companies to conclude contracts for the private sector's production and their failure to offer this production at their branches, Dr Dahmush said: The consuming public sector companies owe the industrial public sector companies dues and debts amounting to 100 million pounds this year, compared to only 60 million pounds last year.

Disengagement of Two Sectors

Eng Ahmad al-Baz, the head of the technical sectors of the Yarn and Textile Authority, said that the private sector plant owners must rely on themselves in marketing their products. This is necessary for the disengagement of the public and private sectors. Every plant owner must be responsible for his production and for marketing this production in the manner he deems fit.

Ahmad al-Baz also said that the public sector exerts efforts to implement the contracts concluded with the private sector plants and with the investment companies. But it makes it conditional that this be done for prior contracts and commitments so that they may be taken into consideration when drawing up the public sector's production plan.

Al-Baz further said that the problem of supplying cotton yarn to the markets is due to the fact that the private sector plants do not draw up a specific plan for their cotton yarn needs. He also said that cotton yarns are available and that plants that are earnest in their wish to maintain their operations can conclude contracts with the companies and commit themselves to set delivery schedules. The problem of the private sector plants is that they want to conclude contracts with the plants producing the yarn at the last moment. This makes it difficult for the public sector plants to produce the desired yarn varieties. So the public sector companies owning these plants decline to conclude the contracts.

The head of the technical sectors of the Yarn Authority said that contracts are binding on both sides, in addition to imposing penalties on the supplier in case he fails to deliver on time or to deliver supplies of the desired quality.

Al-Baz further pointed out that the public sector companies cannot produce all varieties of cotton yarns because of the rapid changes in the demand for

such yarns and he added that some varieties are produced by more than one plant.

Ahmad al-Baz welcomed the importation of cotton yarns from abroad. He said that there is no plant in Egypt that imports cotton yarn because the price of Egyptian cotton yarns is lower than the international prices. Anybody wishing to import is welcome. He said that the companies can supply yarns according to specifications agreed upon at the export price. Al-Baz also pointed out that the new price is still 20 percent below the export prices for cotton yarns.

Experiment in Yarn Importation Is Failure

Ahmad al-Baz, the head of the technical sectors of the Yarn and Textile Authority, warned the private sector against importing cotton yarns from abroad because cotton yarns were actually imported from Syria in 1972 and were exempted from customs fees but the producers refused to collect their share of those yarns because of low quality and specifications.

He asserted that the owners of private plants can get the desired varieties of yarn in the needed quantities if they commit themselves to direct contracts with the producing plants.

He said further that 265,000 tons of yarn will be produced in 1984-85, including 60,000 tons for export, and that the local needs do not exceed 210,000 tons.

He noted that the reason for this year's crisis in yarns is the drop in production because of some difficulties encountered by the plants. Those difficulties caused the production to drop to 240,000 tons.

Eng Ahmad al-Baz, the chairman of the technical sectors of the Yarn Authority, pointed out that the investment firms are supposed to satisfy their needs for cotton yarn through importation but that these firms are currently satisfying their needs from the local yarns that are intended for export and for the use of the private sector.

Al-Baz further noted that the local market's inventory of textiles has risen to nearly 200 million meters, an increase of about 30 percent over the corresponding period of last year. This is the result of the imported clothes arriving with the Egyptians who work abroad because of the availability of equipment manufactured locally through the system of sale on installments and through expansion in assembling such equipment locally [sentence as published].

Al-Baz objects to permitting the importation of mixed yarns because the public sector companies and the investment companies produce such yarns, and therefore why don't the private sector plants conclude contracts with these plants?

He further asserted that Egypt's entire production of synthetic silk is up to the level of the desired quality, that it is not enough at present to meet

the contracts of the various companies and that there is a waiting list of public sector companies for the production of the Egyptian Synthetic Silk Company because of the increased use of this product with cotton yarns and other kinds of yarn.

Our Production Will Not Be Imposed on Private Sector

Al-Baz further pointed out that the public sector companies have recently begun to produce high-quality textiles suitable for the ready-made clothing factories and not for retail sale, that the policy of marketing a product through pressure is out of the question and that the product must suit the consumer's preference. He noted that he does not approve the importation of textiles from abroad for the use of the ready-made clothing factories, that whoever wants to import such textiles should conclude contracts with the existing plants and that there are conditions and standards to be observed and that these conditions and standards are watched by the control agencies and by local and international arbitration agencies.

He said that the losses of the public sector companies as a result of the difference between the current cotton yarn prices and the economic price amount to 100 million pounds a year. The companies are shouldering these losses at the average rate of 600 pounds per ton of yarn, before the new increase.

He said that the major part of the cotton yarn production is consumed by the public sector companies which use nearly 160,000 pounds of this production. Some of these companies, such as the Upper Egypt Yarn Company and Shabin al-Kawm Yarn Company, have specialized in the production of yarns and this causes these companies to continue to incur losses.

The question that persists is: will the private sector yarn and textile companies continue to raise their voice in complaint every year without finding anybody to tell them that this is wrong and must be corrected and these are unfair demands to which they are not entitled? This must happen so that no plant in Egypt may go idle at a time when we are in the direct need to increase production for local consumption and for exportation.

8494

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EGYPT

CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION CRITICIZED

London AL-AHRAM AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 13 Jan 85 p 7

[Editorial by Najib Mahfuz: "General Suicide"]

[Text] The party at an Egyptian artist's home which ended in death for a Moroccan woman was not a mere party, nor a mere artist's home, nor a mere accidental death of a woman. It is in reality evidence of an era which articulates more than a tongue can, and which speaks more than a person can. It is evidence of an era of open door consumption. It symbolizes, in that it points to, its luxury, its lack of restraint, and its style of conduct and morality. It fills art with helpful truths which are added to its traditional reality. Art is not just a message, an inspiration, a sacrifice; it is also ingenuity, skill, proficiency, and preparation of a late night room for someone beset by sleeplessness. It [the party] mocks the housing crisis, which has become complicated, and points it out, while decent people investigate it. It is dissolved, and things get better, at no cost to the followers of the dawn and the forbidden. It affirms, in all courage and frankness, for everyone who is repressed and deprived, that the world is good and its rich people prosperous, pleased, and perfumed with forbidden drink and illicit pleasure in front of imported ladies from distant Arab lands, under the protection of immunity and a good friend among retired security men and lawyers who dedicated mind and soul to the service of the profligate. What can be said, after this, to whomever curses society as infidel. Who is sinless who witnesses this sea of corruption and does not curse it as infidel before others. This evening party of excited sociability in the celebrated house of art, is it not but a massacre of honor and money which pours out waves of distortion amidst a people oppressed by high prices and a hard life, those who frown all the time and who struggle in the path of the individual, the child, the nation and God.

12780

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LIBYA

SWEDES SECRETLY COMMISSIONED TO STUDY INTERNAL GOVERNMENT

Stockholm SVENSKA DAGBLADET in Swedish 17 Jan 85 p 12

[Article by Roger Magnergard: "Libyan Government Commissions Swedish Research Project"]

[Text] The Qadhdhafi regime in Libya is secretly financing a research project under which Swedes will be studying and analyzing the conditions inside the Libyan government.

The beginning of the project was traced back to a professor at the University of Uppsala. He has since withdrawn from the task, after university authorities expressed a critical attitude toward the project.

"We disapproved of the form and content of the project," said Professor Martin Hanson Holmdal, president of the University of Uppsala.

It was 1 year ago that the Libyan government made a large sum of money available for a research project to be carried out by researchers from various Nordic nations. The idea of the project was to study the "third international theory," that is, Qadhdhafi's method of governing Libya.

The project was supposed to result in an analysis of Libyan society, and the Libyan government offered also to pay for possible related field work.

An independent commentator told SVENSKA DAGBLADET that "there is an imminent risk that Qadhdhafi would use any positive research results for propaganda purposes."

Two Rooms in the Castle

The Uppsala professor said that he would conduct the research in his free time. But he abandoned the project when the Uppsala university authorities asked him to provide a description of the project.

"Today, I can assure you that no one working for the university has any connections with the project," Holmdal said.

The research group, however, continues to be allowed to use two rooms in the castle at Uppsala. The research is being directed by a Danish doctoral candidate. SVENSKA DAGBLADET contacted the aforementioned Uppsala professor on Wednesday afternoon and asked him whether he would comment on whether "Libya was paying for a research project in Sweden."

"Where did you get this information?" he asked this reporter. We answered that the newspaper is not supposed to reveal its sources of information.

"Then I am not supposed to answer your question," answered the professor, calling our bluff.

Desired Results

University President Holmdal pointed out that "we always ought to be critical when we are given research funds directly from a democracy which is not pluralistic in nature."

"The funds can be earmarked, such that free research with them is not allowed," he said. "The Libyan government might demand a certain result, and then it becomes the researcher's duty to arrive at that result."

"I don't have any real proof this is the case with the project in question. But since we cannot prove anything to the contrary, the university refuses to be involved," Holmdal said.

9584

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ISRAEL

ISRAEL SEEN AIDING REPRESSIVE CENTRAL AMERICAN REGIMES

Moscow KOMMUNIST VOORUZHENNYKH SIL in Russian No 22, Nov 84 pp 82-84

[Article by M. Nikitin, candidate of economic sciences: "Israel's Intrigues in Central America"]

[Text] More than once Tel Aviv has resorted to aggression against its neighboring states. The United States has invariably come out in its favor, giving it comprehensive aid--military, economic, and political. Without this massive support, Israel, naturally, could not carry on its aggressive course, establishing a regime of terror in lands captured from the Arabs.

But the doctrine of "strategic cooperation" between the United States and Israel extends not only to the Near East but also to other regions. In the subversive politics of the Reagan administration with regard to Central American countries, an important place belongs to Israel. Recently Israel's deliveries of arms, especially to military-terrorist regimes of Central American states, have begun to play a particularly sinister role in the imperialist strategy of suppressing national-liberation movements. Participants in an extraordinary meeting of the Coordination Bureau of Nonaligned Countries, which was held in January 1983 in Managua, adopted a communique expressing their profound distress evoked by Washington's use of Israel's Zionist regime as an instrument for its own interventionist actions in Central America.

Militarist circles of the United States, drawing in Israel, are widely resorting to secret ways of financing arms purchases by countries of Central America. Frequently the credit allocated by American monopolies to the Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica goes to pay for Israeli military technology. In financing the "back door" export of Israeli arms, the Reagan administration is trying to resolve two tasks at once: to hide from the public the true scale of interventionist interference in the affairs of countries of the region, and to ensure lucrative transactions for Israeli arms producers.

Tel Aviv is fitting out the armies of certain Central American states, especially in places where reactionary regimes are in power, with military aircraft, patrol boats, rockets, "Galilee" rifles, "Uzi" submachine guns, and also radio-electronic equipment and communications devices. One of the main

types of military technological supplies to Central America by Israel is the "Arava" transport airplane, which can take off from a small area and carry on military activities, including bombing, from a low height. The "Arava" is discussed in Israeli resumes as an "effective means of fighting partisans in areas of dense forests."

Not at all embarrassed by the fact that this sort of military technology has been employed in the course of bloody aggressions against the Arab peoples, Tel Aviv advertises it as weaponry which "has successfully undergone testing in wars." This fact is significant: Israel suggested that Costa Rica and Honduras accept without payment (except for the transport) arms seized by the occupants in Lebanon in 1982. This liberality is understandable. It conceals the expectation of receiving contracts for Israeli technology from the "grateful" governments. This gesture of giving appears particularly dangerous with regard to Costa Rica, which has no regular army. They are now actively pushing it onto the path of militarization, trying to ignite the situation in Central America, already explosive without that.

Recently, a trend for growth in the export of Israeli arms to Honduras has been noted. In this regard it is impossible not to take note of the 2-day visit in December 1982 to Honduras by then-Defense Minister of Israel A. Sharon. He followed immediately after the American President's visit to this country. This attention of Zionist rulers to Honduras is not accidental. Six years ago Israel sold this country supersonic fighters, which before then had not been in the weaponry of a single Central American state. It is being suggested that an emissary of Tel Aviv had conversations on supplying "Kfir" fighters and other military technology in order to turn Honduras, as the Latin American press writes, into "a Central American Israel"--that is, into a bridgehead of Washington's aggression against the other states of the region, especially against Nicaragua. "In the opinion of observers," noted the Cuban newspaper GRANMA, "this collaboration shows the striving of Israel to strengthen the military air power of Honduras, so that they can eliminate the Nicaraguan anti-air force defenses."

Another circumstance also calls attention to itself. An Israeli "hawk" appeared in Honduras several days after the United States passed an amendment to the law on the military budget which made it more difficult for the Pentagon and CIA to give aid to Somoquist bands in implementing their designs to achieve the overthrow of the Nicaraguan government. Thousands of former national guards of the dictator Somoza, with the help of the American special services, have dug themselves in in Honduras and are waging from there an undeclared war against the Nicaraguan people.

These bandits are, one might say, old friends of the Israeli militarists. After all, it is well-known that Somoza's troops made wide use of Israeli arms in the fight against revolutionary-insurgent forces. In the last months of Somoza's government, when, under the pressure of public opinion, Washington had to reduce military deliveries to the dictator, more than 90 percent of all the needs of the armed forces of the regime for military technology were covered by Israeli export. Special punitive detachments led by Somoza's son were fitted out with "Galilee" rifles. "Arava" airplanes carried out mass bombings of the civilian populations of Managua, Matagalpa, and other cities.

The Zionist leaders of Israel established close ties with Costa Rica, especially after Monge's arrival to the post of president in 1982. Since that time, the center of tension near the southern border of Nicaragua has not cooled. With the broad support of the Reagan administration and the Zionist circles of Tel Aviv, Costa Rica is developing the so-called project of land assimilation in the border zone of Nicaragua. This program, advertised as an ordinary "development of the infrastructure in the northern zone," in actuality is pursuing military-strategic goals (the construction of highways and airports, the creation of radar installations, means of radio communications, and so forth). Experts of the Israeli consulting-construction firm "Tachal" are participating actively in the drawing up of this project. It is worth noting that the foundation of the technical recommendations of the program is the experience of erecting militarized settlements on the west bank of the river Jordan. An important integral part of this program, as the Israeli newspaper HA'ARETZ emphasized, is the construction, based on Israeli technology, of a barrier fitted out with electronic detection devices all along the border between Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

Costa Rican Vice President Alberto Fajal Lizano paid a visit to Israel, in the course of which he was able to enlist the support of commercial circles, aimed at establishing a "climate of trust" between Costa Rica and financial-bank circles of the United States. The point is, the ruling circles of Costa Rica are trying to obtain from Washington credit in the amount of 500 million dollars to construct an ocean-to-ocean railroad which is regarded as an alternative to the Panama Canal. Judging by everything, this "climate of trust" was achieved. In the course of the last visit to the United States by Costa Rican President Monge, who talked with leaders of the American Jewish Committee, the latter expressed their readiness to promote in every possible way the refinancing of Costa Rica's outside debt, and also to give Costa Rica credit, including for the construction of an ocean-to-ocean railroad.

In 1983, the Costa Rican Minister of Social Security visited Israel. During this visit, an agreement was signed concerning the "antiterrorist struggle" and the giving of aid to the intelligence services of Costa Rica. Israeli intelligence services and police organs are sending advisers to Costa Rica who are trying to introduce there their "model" of violence against progressive forces. It is not surprising, therefore, that instances of gangster-style attacks by hirelings of the CIA against Nicaragua from the Costa Rican bridgehead have become more frequent.

Yet another object of the militarist "concern" of Tel Aviv is the fascist regime of Guatemala. Since the mid-1970s, Israeli arms have been coming in a broad stream into this country for the support of pro-American juntas. In 1976 Israel supplied "Arava" airplanes for the Guatemalan air force, and the next year--armored troop carriers, artillery weapons, light infantry weapons, and other military technology.

In the official statistics of Israel, the export of military technology to Guatemala, like the other Central American countries, is usually masked. It is concealed in allotments such as metal goods, electronic equipment, and radio and telegraph apparatus. This makes it difficult to estimate the value

of the military technology and equipment supplied. Furthermore, for the countries of Central America with dictatorial regimes, most of the arms enter by special contracts, outside the official customs statistics, and also as contraband. The shroud of secrecy also cloaks many aspects of the "military aid" given to them by Israel.

Great significance pertains to the organization of agricultural settlements in Guatemala of the type of Israeli kibbutzes. Their creation is aimed at undermining the social base of the revolutionary-patriotic forces, and drawing away part of the peasants from armed forms of struggle against the police rule. It is very significant that the National Cooperative Institute of Guatemala, which studies problems of settlements, is headed by a former soldier of the rank of air force colonel, Fernando Castillo Ramirez, who completed in Israel a course on problems of "agricultural cooperation." Tel Aviv gave 50 grants to Guatemalans to study the "experience" of Israeli agricultural cooperatives. Among the painstakingly selected trainees is a fairly high stratum of soldiers. The ideological handling of Guatemalan grant receivers is also carried out in a center for studying settlements in Rehovot (Israel).

Tel Aviv is actively helping the antipopulist Salvadoran regime. In a country where "death squads" rage, where in the last 3 years 45,000 people have been eliminated, Tel Aviv supplies 80 percent of the arms and military technology.

The collaboration of Israel with reactionary regimes of Central American countries along the lines of secret services has grown to a substantial scale. This collaboration makes it possible for Israel to be introduced into the security services of countries of Central America, weave threads of conspiracies against progressive regimes and political figures, promote the coming to power of military-terrorist regimes useful to imperialism and Zionism, and create conflict situations in the region. Between Israel and a number of Central American countries, an agreement is in effect concerning cooperation and exchange of intelligence data. This type of joint action of the intelligence services of Israel and countries of Central America is largely destabilizing the political situation in the region.

The sale of arms is actively pursued by the special division of the Israeli intelligence service Mossad--one of the most insidious intelligence services of the capitalist world, which has become, according to the accurate definition of the Indian journal BLITZ, "the most dangerous band of assassins in the service of imperialism and Zionism." Its representatives hold important posts in the state companies "Israel Military Industries" and "Israel Aircraft Industries." The intelligence service of Israel holds in its hands the dispatch of "technical specialists" and "consultants" on arms to countries of Central America, and coordinates the subversive activity of Israeli special services.

The special services of Israel, in particular the intelligence service Mossad, use purchasing missions, tourist agencies, the aircraft company "El Al," construction firms, the shipping company "ZIM," and so forth to cover up their subversive activity in Central America.

After the overthrow of the dictator Somoza, both Mossad and the CIA maintained contacts with staff members of the guard and its agents, who are now being used as mercenaries for organizing terror and provocations against Nicaragua. Mossad is giving support to the CIA in carrying out subversive measures with regard to the revolutionary-patriotic forces of El Salvador. Based on Israeli technology, Guatemala has created an electronic center for information processing. This center, serviced by Israeli experts, is providing information for Guatemalan military reconnaissance.

Under the leadership of Israeli instructors, in Guatemala there is a center for training military cadres intended to fight the partisan movement in countries of Central America. Former leader of the Guatemalan military junta General Montt publicly announced to a reporter of ABC television that the coup d'etat which in its time brought him to power was so successful "because many soldiers were trained by Israeli instructors." Recently the instructors arrived from Israel to set about training Guatemalan pilots in methods of piloting "Arava" and "Kfir" airplanes.

Official Washington propaganda asserts that the United States is in favor of limitation and a near prohibition of arms supplies to Latin America, especially Central America. But even without mentioning that the United States itself is continuing to provide military technology on a growing scale to antipopulist regimes of Central America, they encourage Israel in the same direction. "The Israeli military presence in the region of Central America," notes GRANMA, "serves the purposes of Zionism and imperialism, which are connected to each other by close ties. Tel Aviv, obviously, has a favorable attitude toward Washington's appeal to render assistance in securing its Central American interests. Together they hope to create new zones of influence which will help to check the growing power of revolutionary movements in the Western hemisphere."

The military-strategic alliance of the United States and Israel is largely destabilizing the environment in Central America, creating there centers of tension and conflict situations. Despite the painstaking masking of goals, and the hypocrisy and demagoguery of Zionist circles of Israel, the peoples of the countries of Central America are becoming more and more convinced of the reactionary essence and aggressive methods of Israel's policies.

The facts confirm that Israel has turned into one of the militarist supports of dictatorial regimes in Central America. As early as the first Solidarity Conference of the Peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, held in Havana in 1966, it was emphasized that Zionism is a movement imperialist in its nature, aggressive and expansionistic in its goals, racist in its structure, and fascist in its means and methods. The subversive intrigues of Israel in Central America serve as confirmation of this conclusion in our day. Supplying the latest weaponry to the most reactionary regimes in the world, Israel has served and continues to serve as a true instrument of world imperialism, striving to suppress the national-liberation movement of the peoples.

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IRAQ

COMPUTER SYSTEM CONTROLS OBSERVATORY TELESCOPE

Baghdad THE BAGHDAD OBSERVER in English 8 Dec 84 p 4

[Article by Basil A. al-Hadithi]

[Text]

A microcomputer based tracking system is used to orient the controlled telescope of al-Battani Observatory, to the observed object in such a manner as to keep the object in the field of the telescope's view all the time.

The system includes a dome unit to synchronize the dome movement with that of the telescope. The synchronisation depends on the conversion of the equatorial coordinate to azimuth coordinate in order to calculate the azimuth angle of the object.

It requires accurate timing to achieve this precision, and a universal-sidereal clock was designed and implemented. This clock provides the system with the universal and local sidereal time of al-Battani Observatory through the microcomputer itself.

The function of a telescope tracking system is to keep the image of the observed object in the field of view of the telescope. To achieve this task, the polar axis of the equatorial mount of the telescope must rotate in such a manner that the

relative motion of the object, with respect to the observer, is negligible.

The system installed in al-Battani Observatory controls a 40 cm Cassigrinian telescope and 5 cm. dome of al-Battani. It includes both axes of the telescope in addition to the tracking mechanism with variable speed to provide accurate tracking for moon and planets.

The hardware system consists of four individual units, which are built around an SDK-85 microcomputer. The universal time clock is designed to provide the system with the current values of universal time in binary forms. These values are used by the computer to calculate the corresponding values of the local time of al-Battani Observatory, corrected whenever the computer receives the highest priority "interrupt" signal.

A telescope control unit gives the absolute position of the telescope to the computer that calculates the desired angle through which the telescope must be rotated. The equatorial coordinates are converted into azimuth system in order to control the dome. The shutter direction is corrected periodically whenever a third-priority "interrupt" signal is received from the real time clock.

The observatory uses what has been termed as the "Interrupt" facilities of an 8085 microprocessor. The sidereal clock was built around an SDK-85 microcomputer. A universal time clock was used to generate such time in BCD form to be displayed directly to the observer and in binary form to be used by the computer itself. A frequency of 100 megahertz was entered to the sidereal corrector to generate the highest priority "interrupt" signal that corrects the sidereal time whenever received by the microcomputer. A speed measurement unit is designed to provide the compu-

ter with motor speed at any instant. A programme divider is used to control the I/P frequency when the microcomputer receives second priority "interrupt" signal.

A third priority "interrupt" signal will instruct the computer to calculate the differences in the azimuth angle between two "interrupt" signals. It then rotates the dome in the proper direction and at the correct angle.

The system provides a fully automatic control on the 40 cm. telescope and 5 cm. dome of al-Battani Observatory.

This system contains both a universal time clock and sidereal time clock, with an accuracy of 100 seconds, which can be used as an observatory clock. This unit can be used to control more than one telescope at the same time, which is an advantage of this clock.

Telescope rotating accuracy in this case is around 110 for both axes. Dome accuracy obtained in this present work is 11 which is exactly what is needed.

LEBANON

AL-SHUF DEPUTY EXPLAINS PLAN TO FORM MOUNTAIN COUNCIL

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic No 1470, 4 Jan 85 p 14

[Interview with Deputy Fu'ad al-Tahini by Sharbil Zughayb: "Fu'ad al-Tahini Explains His Plan to Form 'Mountain Council'; Solution Is in Partitioning Solution"]

[Text] With the start of the implementation of every security plan in Beirut, the eyes turn anew toward the mountain, asking about the possibility of the success of a plan to enable the evacuees to return to their homes and rebuild their destroyed villages.

While waiting for the formulation and the successful implementation of such a plan, ideas are projected from time to time on organizing the conditions of the evacuees to help them overcome the current phase. The latest idea projected in this regard is a proposal by lawyer Fu'ad al-Tahini, al-Shuf deputy, calling for the formation of a "mountain council" similar to the Southern Council.

Deputy al-Tahini had planned to submit this proposal in the wake of the mountain war but the flow of aid to the evacuees from the social and humanitarian organizations in the initial period motivated the Dayr al-Qamar deputy to proceed deliberately. However, the passage of 2 years without the attainment of a solution has revived the discussion of the idea.

Deputy al-Tahini says that his plan seeks to aid the evacuees, the majority of whom are still suffering from deprivation and hardship as a result of living in warehouses and in some schools and churches. The plan also seeks to help the mountain inhabitants to restore or rebuild their homes. The second part of the plan calls for keeping some funds in the "mountain council" so that they may be disbursed to the evacuees upon their return "because when we reach this phase, the aid activity will have ended."

We have had the following interview with Deputy al-Tahini on this plan:

[Question] How far have the meetings and contacts concerning the return of the evacuees gone and are you optimistic over an imminent return of these evacuees?

[Answer] The evacuees' return to the mountain is encountering numerous obstacles, the first being the condition made by the Druze that they make political gains to approve their return, the second being their demand that the state restore and rebuild the buildings damaged in 'Alayh in particular so that the Druze may leave the Christian homes they have occupied in al-Shuf area and return to their homes and villages in the 'Alayh area, and the third being the presence of some projections among a number of Druze circles calling for partition, such as the allegation that coexistence has become impossible in the wake of the experiences of 1840 and 1975 and the claim that the Druze want to set up their own entity. This projection has actually been opposed even within the Druze sect itself. All these reasons together will impede the return of the evacuees to the mountain for a time.

[Question] The security plan implemented in the capital may have a positive impact on the mountain security plan about which there has been a lot of talk recently?

[Answer] The Beirut plan is a consent plan and not a military plan in the full sense of the word. It is a plan which has come about through agreement between the various parties. This plan may achieve the result which every citizen expects if the state is able within this period to fuse the army elements in a united national crucible to confront any violation occurring in any part of Beirut. If this experience occurs and the army withstands it, then we will have made a fundamental stride on the path of re-directing Lebanon and of rebuilding the state.

Beirut's security must go hand in hand with two things: first, the mountain security plan because whatever happens in the mountain has its ramifications to Beirut. Here, I must say that I am totally surprised that those who met in Bikfayya decided to implement the security plan for the coastal highway before formulating and implementing a security plan for the mountain because a mountain plan is the guarantee for the success of the Beirut plan and because the success of the coastal highway plan requires the adoption of certain measures in the mountain, beginning with Suq al-Gharb, al-Shuwayfat and Khaldah and ending in al-Kharrub District.

Second, the national reconciliation plan must be expedited to insure the full and complete success of the security plans so that no faction in the arena may be given the chance to claim that there is procrastination in giving the sects their rights and in establishing the new system on new and developed bases.

[Question] Isn't it possible to formulate a security plan for the mountain through consent, as has happened in Beirut, by way of agreement between the Christian and Druze leaderships there?

[Answer] Under the current circumstance, I find it unlikely that a security plan can be formulated for the mountain area through consent. Let us be frank. The 'Alayh area falls within the Syrian sphere of influence and

al-Shuf area within the Israeli sphere of influence. Consequently, it is difficult to reach the same solution for both areas, especially since Israel has set up important military bases in al-Baruk Mountain of the al-Shuf area and since Israel will not abandon these bases as easily as some imagine. In my opinion, the mountain area must be partitioned at the security level if we plan to reach solutions, meaning that we should start by formulating a partial plan for the 'Alayh area where the Syrian influence is evident and can help to reopen the 'Alayh-Damascus highway and establish security and stability in this area, thus paving the way for the return of the evacuees to their homes.

[Question] If the al-Naqurah negotiations succeed, Israel will certainly withdraw from al-Baruk. The regime is optimistic about achieving this end quickly. This means facilitating the regime's task of releasing a security plan for al-Shuf that is similar to the 'Alayh plan. Do you agree with this opinion?

[Answer] Israel will not leave al-Baruk area as easily as some imagine because this area is strategic militarily and because Israel has spent hundreds of millions of dollars there. It is said that NATO is behind the installations Israel has built in the area. Perhaps the demand that U.N. forces coming from the NATO countries only be deployed in the al-Bakru area is what has motivated U.S. Envoy Murphy to embark on large-scale movement in the Middle East and then to complete this movement in the capitals of some NATO countries. Information indicates that in case the Lebanese-Israeli negotiations succeed, the U.N. forces coming to Lebanon will be comprised of the forces of western countries that are well known for their affiliation with NATO.

[Question] In case the information you are citing materializes, it will have a positive impact on al-Shuf, regardless of whether these installations come under the control of the State of Lebanon or under the supervision of NATO forces, with the approval of the State of Lebanon?

[Answer] Undoubtedly. The return of the evacuees will occur and the Israeli withdrawal from al-Awwali will speed up the return process greatly. This return process will be further expedited by the deployment of the U.N. forces, whether in al-Baruk or on the borders of al-Shuf, i.e. in al-Awwali. The materialization of such deployment is likely to bolster stability in the entire area adjacent to al-Shuf and likely to facilitate the entry of the Lebanese army and the legitimate government to the mountain areas.

[Question] Should Israel embark on a partial unilateral withdrawal, what will happen?

[Answer] This is likely to happen. Israel has made more than one threat recently, especially since the al-Naqurah negotiations began to falter. Israel may resort to a withdrawal that is not coordinated with the United Nations or with the State of Lebanon with the aim of creating sectarian

problems, especially in Al-Kharrub District because this area still lives in a tense atmosphere. In case a sudden withdrawal from al-Awwali area takes place, it is feared that fierce battles will be resumed in al-Kharrub District. This will achieve the Israeli objective, which seeks to rekindle problems in all areas.

[Question] But the State of Lebanon seeks to speed up the dispatch of the Lebanese army to the coastal line extending to al-Awwali and al-Kharrub District in order to obstruct the implementation of this Israeli plot. In your opinion, will the state succeed in this regard?

[Answer] This relies on the degree of agreement reached between the government and the Socialist Party because I do not believe that the government will send the army to the coast if there is no prior agreement with the said party. From a patriotic and national basis, I believe that all the parties must work for unification and must consolidate their forces and efforts to reopen the coastal highway because obstructing the reopening of this highway, which is the path to the south--and we know what liberation of the south means to all of us--undermines the patriotic and nationalist tendencies.

[Question] In case the army is deployed in the district and, subsequently, takes control of the 'Alayh-Damascus highway, will this army be able, in your opinion, to move to the mountain across the district and 'Alayh axes?

[Answer] I do not believe that restoration of the mountain to the fold of the legitimate government can be accomplished with force because there is a united sect with closed ranks that stands firmly behind its demands, some of which may be rightful and some may not. I do not believe that the country can be reunited in the manner the interest of the country itself requires without the agreement of all the parties concerned, unless the idea calling for the establishment of self-rule advocated by some Druze prevails among this sect. Should this idea prevail, it will be difficult to reach a solution through consent between the legitimate government and the Druze. However, we hope that the unification line will prevail over the partitionist line among our Druze brothers.

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LEBANON

RECONSTRUCTION COUNCIL OUTLINES FINANCING REQUIREMENTS

Beirut AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 7 Jan 85 pp 2-3

[Article by Dr. Elias Baroudi]

[Text]

The beginning of 1985 in Lebanon was marked by continuing political uncertainty, a deepening economic recession and a further downward slide in the exchange value of the Lebanese pound, which, to be sure, also reflected a speculative jitteriness on the local foreign-exchange market.

With rather inauspicious timing, the Council for Développement and Reconstruction (CDR) submitted a report to the Council of Ministers (the Cabinet) at its first meeting of the new year outlining Lebanon's projected needs for foreign aid and loans to finance the "reconstruction process".

The report estimated Lebanon's external financing requirements at between \$1bn and \$1.2bn a year over the next eight-to-nine-year reconstruction period; or, a total of \$8bn to \$10bn. It was further indicated that external financing must cover around three-quarters of total reconstruction requirements, the implication being that such requirements are now estimated between \$1.3bn and \$1.6bn a year during the eight-to-nine-year period required to implement the reconstruction plan; or an aggregate of between \$10.4bn and \$14.4bn. Expressed in Lebanese pounds at the rate of exchange prevailing at the beginning of the year, this is equivalent to between 93bn and 128bn Lebanese pounds.

It may be recalled here that nearly a year after it was established, the CDR launched Lebanon's first reconstruction plan in December 1978, which envisaged the expenditure of about \$6.9bn (at the December 1978 exchange rate against the dollar) over an eight-year period to overcome the ravages of the fighting which swept the country in 1975-76.

The implementation of this first plan, however, was slowed down considerably by the continuing instability and by the shortage of funds, particularly since only a fraction of the L.L.10.5bn expected to be

Reconstruction Finance

Sources	million of dollars	
A: Grants		
1. Arab Aid (Tunis pledge)	2,000	(of which 417 actually paid)
2. Aid	289	(of which 159 received)
3. UN Development Programme	20	
4. Holland	1	
5. Australia	4	
6. EEC	39	2,353
B: Financial protocols (Government-to-government loans)		
1. First French protocol	21	
2. Second French protocol	124	
3. EEC protocol	131	
4. Italian protocol	130	(of which 30 is for arms)
5. Hungarian protocol	25	
6. Czechoslovakian protocol	20	
8. West German loan	6	462
C: Loans from international and regional lending institutions		
1. World Bank	89.6	(100 expected)
2. Arab Fund	29	(40 expected to be agreed)
3. Abu Dhabi Fund	17	
4. Islamic Bank	10	145.6
D: Commercial loans		
Total of commercial loans concluded	175	175
Total of finance		\$3,135.6mn

Source: Council for Development and Reconstruction

obtained in the form of grants or concessionary loans -- mainly from the Arab oil-producing countries -- was actually secured. Accordingly, the plan was revised and made less ambitious in 1980 and priority was given to basic projects, such as housing, health and infrastructure. The revised plan did not include a precise schedule of expenditure and was, thus, an agenda for necessary action but not a timetable.

In February 1983, at a time when there were strong hopes that Lebanon was moving towards normality and recovery, the CDR prepared a new and revised reconstruction plan which took account of the additional and considerable damage resulting from Israel's invasion of Lebanon in June 1982.

This revised plan provided for an outlay of a total of L162.2bn, or around \$13bn (at 1982-83 prices

and the exchange rate at that time), on reconstruction over a nine-year period, from 1983 to 1991. Needless to say, the implementation of this plan was also put back by the renewed fighting in various parts of Lebanon since that date and by the consequent drying up of foreign aid and loans. More important, perhaps, the fighting has brought in its train a further increase in reconstruction requirements, which, by some estimates, are at least equivalent to total reconstruction outlays made in the period from 1978 to the early part of 1983.

In its latest report, the CDR points out that, ideally, around 50 to 60 per cent of the external financing required in the future should be in the form of outright grants, with 20 to 30 per cent in the form of long-term soft loans, another 20 to 35 per cent in loans obtained under bilateral financial protocols, and the rest in the form of commercial loans.

The CDR stresses that the realisation of these targets requires, after the re-establishment of security throughout the country, an all-out national effort to marshal the full cooperation of other Arab countries and Western donors, as well as to correct the situation of the government's budget and to reduce the public debt, and to provide the full gamut of technical support services for reconstruction on the part of the CDR itself and other specialised institutions in Lebanon.

Undoubtedly, such a national effort must also encompass measures to generate the required

amount of internal financing for the reconstruction plan. Since, even if Lebanon is successful in realising the CDR's over-ambitious external financing targets, it would still have to meet somewhere between \$330mn and \$400mn of the annual reconstruction bill from internal sources over an eight-to-nine-year period. This means that the total of internal financing required over a nine-year period is between \$2.97bn and \$3.6bn, the latter total being in excess of Lebanon's gross domestic product in 1984, which is estimated at around \$3.5bn.

In the final analysis, however, Lebanon's success in financing the reconstruction plan, whether from internal or external sources and, indeed, in launching the full-scale reconstruction effort will hinge on political and security developments and the speed with which normality can be restored to the country. Since 1977 and as figures provided in the CDR report indicate, Lebanon has been pledged \$3.135bn in grants and concluded \$782.6mn worth of external loans under financial protocols and from regional and international lending agencies (see table below). Of this total, however, only \$1.207bn, or 38.5 per cent, has been received or disbursed to date and this mainly because of the continuing instability in the country, which has impeded reconstruction efforts. Arab aid donors have been particularly recalcitrant in this respect, since only \$417mn of the \$2bn in grants pledged to Lebanon at the Tenth Arab Summit conference, which was held in Tunis in November 1979, has been received to date.

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

'ARAFAT DISCUSSES PROBLEMS FACING PLO

Brussels NORD SUD in French 15 Sep-15 Oct 84 pp 8-10

[Interview with Yasir 'Arafat by Christian Taverniers; date and place not given]

[Text] In the exclusive interview he granted to NORD SUD, the Palestinian leader spoke of peace with conviction and sincerity. An Israeli state and a Palestinian state side by side--this is the solution for the future. At a time when President Mitterrand, backed by a European consensus, was preparing to take action as soon as the new Israeli government was installed, and when the almost certain reelection of Reagan for his last term would make him less dependent on the American Jewish lobby, it was interesting to summarize the situation with Yasir 'Arafat.

For the first time, and in many respects with a fear of being misunderstood, the unchallenged leader of Palestine has thus very explicitly recognized the Israeli state. Now that Israel is changing government, the ball is for the time being in the Israeli court.

NORD SUD: In the view of the whole world, your name is synonymous with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The public in Europe and America cannot conceive of the PLO without Yasir 'Arafat. You are regarded as responsible for everything the organization does, for good or for evil. How does this situation strike you?

Yasir 'Arafat: I think that to reduce the PLO to the single dimension of one man, or even a group of men, is an error and reveals a real failure to understand the nature of the Palestinian people and the organization.

The Palestinian people are profoundly committed to the values of individual freedom, as well as those of democracy. It is a question of a population, of course, whose members feel bound to each other by a sense of profound solidarity, of membership in a single nation. The fate which has been theirs for so many years, victims as they have been of occupation and exile, has accentuated their patriotism and their determination to obtain for themselves a state which belongs to them. But it is their desire that this state represent and guarantee the profound pluralism which characterizes the Palestinian whole.

You know that Christians as well as Muslims and even Jews exist among us on a footing of perfect equality and total fraternity. For example, Naim Khader, the head of our information office in Brussels, who was the victim of a vile assassination several years ago and who enjoyed the complete confidence of the PLO leadership, was an ardent Catholic. There are others, such as Msgr Helarion Capucci, the bishop of Jerusalem who was taken prisoner by the Israelis and expelled from the occupied territory in 1977; Sheikh Abouteir, a revolutionary Muslim leader who was arrested; and Ahud Yadiv, an Israeli officer and commander of the Red Front, who launched the military struggle against Israel and who was arrested with a group of Jewish and Arab militants in 1972.

The Palestinian people are also determined that their future fatherland meet the requirements of a true democracy, in harmony with their traditions. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the PLO is inspired by the same ideals and requirements. It is pluralistic and it is organized on a democratic basis such as to respect the identity of the various movements making it up and to try, through its organs, to guarantee representation and a voice in affairs for each. The establishment of a veritable representative democracy is not easy for a movement in the midst of struggle, such as ours, but it is something which is essential for us and to which we are committed.

The leadership of our organization is, then, in its structure and in its actions, a reflection of the desires of its members, its combatants. If, along with others, moreover, I have the honor to lead these members, it is based on the confidence they have been so kind as to place in me and in the direction in which they instruct me.

Central Leadership Responsible

[Question] Certain groups included in the PLO seem to escape the control of its leadership. Much more than that, they have recently opposed the leadership with violence, even going so far as to engage in armed confrontation, which, to say the very least, created serious problems for you, and doubtless still does. What is the situation?

[Answer] We are, unfortunately, at war. It is always difficult for the central command to control everything happening on the front. This is even more the case in a battle such as ours, where the front changes, takes many forms and cannot be defined precisely. If you add to this the fact that the PLO is a whole which, as I have already told you, wants to respect the reality of the movements making it up, it should not be surprising to you that incidental actions by certain of the components take place independent of the desires of the leadership.

Where the recent armed clashes to which you refer are concerned, they were the direct consequence, on the one hand, of the tragedy caused by the brutal and unjustifiable invasion of Lebanon by Israel, and its consequences for the PLO, and, on the other hand, various instances of foreign intervention. Since the end of the battle of Lebanon, the organization has made an effort to regroup on the basis of a reevaluation of its situation pursued in democratic fashion

within its competent bodies, such as the meeting of the Palestinian Council in Algeria in the month of February 1983. It is within this same framework and spirit that, following the armed clashes, it is in the process of reestablishing its unity. However regrettable and even tragic they may be, the clashes in question are not abnormal. They reflect the frustrations and the disappointments which very naturally become more acute in the course of as painful and long a war as that we are waging. The important thing is to safeguard the unity of our people and the strength of our organization.

As a central leadership, we are responsible for all the PLO does. But it is impossible for any leadership, within the framework of liberation wars and resistance against occupation, to seek to control absolutely everything that happens, above all when an entire people, with all its components and factions, is waging a battle against the occupier. I would also add that we are proud of one thing within the PLO, and that is the democracy which prevails therein. This democracy does indeed offer advantages, but there are disadvantages as well. However, we fully accept both the advantages and the disadvantages of our democratic system. It is also important to remember that there will always be attempts to interfere in order to gain control of or direct the PLO. Thanks to our faith in a just cause, we have been able to protect our revolution, our entity, our independent Palestinian political will and the Palestinian spirit against all outside efforts at subversion.

[Question] And what about terrorism? Israel says that the PLO is a terrorist organization, and the attacks which are attributed to or claimed by it arouse profound resentment, both in the world public and that in Israel. Do you realize how much they contribute to making Israel inflexible and reducing your credibility as a possible peaceful interlocutor, both within the Israeli state and outside it?

[Answer] I reiterate that we are in a self-defense situation, and we are fighting against planned Israeli terrorism and occupation. We are at war. Israel is waging this war against the Palestinian people without the slightest pity, and since the beginning, has made no effort to spare our civilian population. As everyone knows, Israel organized the Sabra and Chatilla massacres which horrified the world. But for us this was but one incident, coming within a long series of bloody actions perpetrated directly or indirectly by the Israel against the state of our people and the Lebanese people, in which thousands of Palestinian civilians, in particular defenseless women, children and old people, were victims.

No Civilian Targets

You say that Israel views the PLO as a terrorist organization. For my part, I can tell you that the Palestinians view Israel as a terrorist organization against which we are defending ourselves and our brothers. Our actions are nothing but resistance against occupation, and thus our legal right in terms of the U.N. Charter. This is nothing but defensive action to which we have been forced.

You must understand this, you whose resistance movements found themselves forced, in the course of World War II, to have recourse to similar actions

against the German occupiers. There is one thing which I have often said: a distinction must be made between operations directed against civilian targets and operations directed against military targets. We are opposed to all operations directed against any civilian targets whatsoever, whatever the party carrying them out. As to those aimed at military targets, they are a part of war, and you will agree that the army against which we are fighting is not just any army. It is supertrained, armed and financed by the Americans and it has political and diplomatic support, not to overlook the support it receives from the media. Thanks to the United States, it has the most modern and most sophisticated equipment. It is admitted in Israel that the resistance we managed to put up against it in Lebanon was a nasty surprise for our adversaries. You will see then that the heroism shown by our fighters in the battles at Ein el Heloue (refugee camp in Saida), the El Shakif Fortress (Chateau de Beaufort), and during the Beirut odyssey was recognized by our enemies even before our friends. For example, an Israeli military chronicler, Zef Schiff, wrote an article entitled "The Palestinian Surprise" in their army review.

[Question] Now what about the meeting between Kaddomi and President Assad?

[Answer] That meeting was a positive one lasting about four and a half hours, during which it was decided to pursue the Syrian-Palestinian dialogue in order to reach an overall agreement on the issues on which we differ. The point of departure for this concept of agreement is the resolution of the problems which exist between us and our Syrian brothers, as we were able to do in 1976. I am sure that we will succeed.

Two Nations In Peace

[Question] For you then, the war must be pursued? Or is it what is called the political option?

[Answer] Let us be clear. What I want is peace. For me peace means a just peace, based on and deriving from the legality and international rights approved by the U.N., and recognizing the rights of our people, including the right to have a place in the sun and to live in freedom like all peoples, in other words a Palestinian state.

The best proof thereof is that the PLO has not rejected the proposals made with a view to a just peace, and that it has remained faithful, through all its difficulties, to what is called the Fez Plan. For the time being, Israel does not accept this peace. And then we are resisting the occupation. It is our right and our duty, even according to the United Nations Charter, to fight against the occupation of what is our land, as you did when you were occupied.

[Question] But what concrete proposal do you make?

[Answer] We are ready to present ourselves at any "negotiating table" provided that we can do so as what we are and as equals. For example, we are willing to participate in a peace conference held under the sponsorship of the United Nations, as well as to participate in direct negotiations with the Israelis, also organized by the United Nations. I remind you that I recently

announced our agreement to an international conference in which all the parties in conflict in the Middle East would participate, including, naturally, the PLO, to be held under the auspices of the United Nations and with members of the Security Council participating. Which Israel categorically rejected.

[Question] To what might such negotiations lead?

[Answer] I have already said elsewhere that peace is a challenge I proposed to the Jewish voters during the Israeli election campaign. Such negotiations might lead to the mutual recognition of the two states--an Israeli state and a Palestinian state--and to peace between the two of them, for it is peace that we want. Peace, peace, peace, and the recognition and implementation of international legality.

5157

CSO: 4419/3

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

DFLP'S SALIH RA'FAT ON RELATIONSHIP WITH PLO

Lisbon AVANTE! Supplement in Portuguese 27 Dec 84 p 3

[Excerpts] [Question] What is the DFLP's [Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine] position on the current situation within the PLO?

[Answer] Ever since the beginning of the PLO's current crisis, the DFLP, as an independent organization and a member of the Democratic Alliance, has supported a position of anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist and anti-reactionary unity and independence for the PLO.

In this context, we maintained a dialogue with the Fatah's Central Committee, which culminated in the Algerian and Aden agreements. These agreements were essentially based on the decisions of the 16th session of the National Palestinian Council [CNP], which rejected all U.S. and Israeli moves against the rights of the Palestinian people and stressed the importance of the PLO alliance with patriotic Arab forces and all progressive forces in the world, and with Socialist countries.

From an internal, organic standpoint, the Algerian and Aden agreements included important decisions regarding the democratization of the PLO, and especially the need for collective leadership, to put an end to the individualistic practices of the PLO president, and the need for the Central Council to have legislative power to ensure control of the Executive Committee's policies.

After the Algerian and Aden agreements were signed, doubts arose as to their interpretation and how to implement them. The DFLP felt that a 17th meeting of the CNP was the appropriate forum for ensuring that the Algerian and Aden agreements would become part of the PLO's policy platform and that the democratic reforms contained in them would be implemented. We were ready to participate in the meeting, along with Fatah and all the other forces making up the PLO, to be held in any anti-imperialist Arab state involved in the common struggle.

Unfortunately, the National Alliance refused to participate in the 17th meeting which was to be held in Algeria, and insisted on its dissenting views.

Since it was impossible under these circumstances to hold the meeting in Algeria, Fatah's Central Committee decided to hold it in Amman.

[Question] A meeting which the DFLP did not attend....

[Answer] We did not attend the 17th meeting of the CNP held in the Jordanian capital because holding it in that city had political significance. It reinforced Jordan's role in the Arab world and internationally, which was prejudicial to the goal of establishing an independent Palestinian state.

Even though we did not attend the 17th meeting in Amman, we consider ourselves an integral part of the PLO, and we still hold that it is the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and oppose any attempt to set up a parallel or alternative PLO or leadership.

[Question] And what is your position with regard to the work and the conclusions of the Amman meeting?

[Answer] As far as the work of the 17th meeting is concerned, we reject the Hussein plan and his attempt to represent the Palestinian people and prevent a separate Palestinian state from being formed. We regard it as an attempt by Jordan to establish direct negotiations with Israel, under the influence of the United States and the Reagan plan. We believe that if Israel and Jordan were to pursue negotiations, there is a danger that a sell-out solution would be reached, legitimizing Israel's presence in the occupied territories and linking them to Jordan, to the detriment of the rights of the Palestinian people, and particularly their right to self-determination and to form an independent Palestinian state.

Since the 17th meeting of the CNP, we have continued our efforts to achieve unity on the basis of the Algerian and Aden agreements, so that we may form a united front against the Jordan plan, the Reagan plan and Israeli occupation.

We are in favor of continuing the dialogue among the participants in the Algerian and Aden agreements--i.e., Fatah and the Democratic Alliance--which does not mean that we are trying to exclude other organizations, and especially the National Alliance, from our efforts to regain unity.

[Question] What does DFLP support for unity of the PLO mean...

[Answer] We will oppose any attempts from any source to divide the PLO, as division only benefits enemies of the Palestinian people--imperialism, Zionism, Arab reactionaries and particularly Jordan.

We trust that our allies, including the Socialist camp with the Soviet Union as its leading force, the workers movement in capitalist countries, national liberation movements, and the non-aligned countries, will continue to recognize the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and the right of our people to self-determination and to form an independent state.

[Question] In terms of immediate prospects, what is your position on holding an international conference on the Middle East?

[Answer] We are pursuing our efforts, along with all our friends, to hold an international conference on the situation in the Middle East, on the basis of the U.N. resolutions and the Soviet proposal on the subject, i.e., to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to form an independent state and the right of the PLO to participate in this conference independently, alongside all the other participants.

At the same time, in the political and military fields and for the people as a whole, we are pursuing our campaign against Zionist terrorism and oppression within the occupied territories, including the armed struggle of the people and Lebanese patriots to expel the Israeli invaders and ensure their unconditional withdrawal from Lebanon, pursuant to U.N. Security Council resolutions Nos. 508 and 509.

We are confident that our friends--Algeria, Southern Yemen, the USSR and other Socialist countries--will continue their efforts to correct and strengthen relations between the PLO and Syria. It is essential that all Arab patriots join together to fend off U.S. attempts to dominate the Middle East.

We are certain that the PLO will regain its unity.

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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

PFLP'S SAMIR SALAH ON RELATIONSHIP WITH PLO

Lisbon AVANTE! Supplement in Portuguese 27 Dec 84 p 4

[Excerpts] [Question] What is the PFLP's [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine] position on the current situation within the PLO?

[Answer] The problems facing the PLO today are the most serious ones since it was founded, as they endanger its unity and even its existence. If these dangers should become a reality, the Palestinian people would lose their most important conquest.

The source of these problems was the appearance, after the 1982 withdrawal from Beirut, of a current within the PLO which opposed the struggle to change the current balance of power as useless and was in favor of going along with U.S. imperialist plans.

This group is opposed to any form of struggle and believes that the only solution to the Palestinian problem is to negotiate the American proposals in one way or another (such as a modified Camp David or the Reagan plan or the Hussein plan for a Jordanian-Palestinian state which was first put forward in 1972, among others).

All this is seen in the tendency of the current rightist leadership of the PLO to maintain increasingly closer relations with reactionary Arab regimes (Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, with the support of Saudi Arabia and the oil-producing countries of the Persian Gulf), while at the same time relations with nationalist Arab regimes worsen, bridges are being built towards the U.S. and the EEC, and the need to have privileged relations with the Socialist camp and particularly with the USSR is being questioned.

Although these leaders still have influence within the PLO, a growing number of our people realize the dangers of this policy and the majority of the organizations in the PLO is against it.

[Question] Does the PFLP believe that this is affecting the situation within the PLO?

[Answer] The PLO is a political movement and its unity has been maintained through agreements between the forces comprising it, in that it has a basic political platform approved by the legal organs of the PLO and endorsed by the various organizations.

The behavior of the rightist PLO leadership has been practically the opposite of what the rules and regulations of a national movement would require.

It is important to make it clear that the differences do not stem from matters of a personal nature, but they are basic political problems which affect our entire political struggle.

We have always been aware of the vital need to resolve these problems while preserving the anti-imperialist and progressive nature of a PLO united on the basis of a basic political platform and collective leadership. We do not want just any kind of unity, but a unity based on a progressive PLO, which would be acquired through political and democratic dialogue to resolve our differences.

The PFLP and the Democratic Alliance have put forward a clear political formula based on the decisions of the 16th meeting of the National Palestinian Council held in Algeria, namely, a dialogue among all the organizations for the common objective of fighting against Israeli occupation, and an alliance with all progressive Arab regimes, including Syria, representing the entire region and the struggle against imperialist aggression.

[Question] How do you view the present situation, now that the 17th meeting of the CNP has been held in Amman?

[Answer] The CNP's 17th meeting in Amman did not solve any problems and aggravated all of them. It was convened unilaterally by a single organization, Fatah, and by President Yasir Arafat, and we believe that it was preceded by an agreement last March between Arafat and King Hussein to present the Hussein plan, which is nothing more than an amended version of the Reagan plan.

At the present time we still believe that the unity of the PLO is the most important task of the Palestinian people, and every effort should be made to rebuild it. In our view, the proper way to do it would be to convene another meeting of the CNP in which all the organizations would participate, without any prior conditions, on the basis of the Algerian and Aden agreements.

The policy being followed by the PLO's current leadership--and we are interested in action and not words--is not conducive to holding an international conference on the Middle East, which we support. After the CNP's Amman meeting, the PLO's main leaders visited Saudi Arabia and Iraq (Arafat), Egypt (where Sorlani went) and France (where Farouk Kadoumi went). These regimes are linked to the United States and its policy, and a solution to the problems of the Middle East cannot be disassociated from the struggle between the imperialist camp and socialism--and clearly in our view, the national Arab movement should be on the side of the socialist camp.

We need a clear, unambiguous policy, and we need to continue our struggle and to work to rebuild the PLO's unity, which is indispensable.

SYRIA

MITTERRAND ATTEMPTS TO SMOOTH RELATIONS WITH SYRIA

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic 24 Nov 84 p 23

[Article: "Mitterrand--al-Asad Meeting: Paris Requests Syrian Visa in Preparation for Working To Shake Up Regional Crises"]

[Text] Since he came to the Elysee Palace in 1981, President Mitterrand has visited the capitals directly involved in the Middle East crisis. The only one remaining for the French president to visit is the Syrian capital, Damascus, which will complete his contacts to establish a French diplomatic role affecting the course of events and developments in that part of the world. This is the reason that French officials give such importance to President Mitterrand's first official visit to Damascus on 26 and 27 November. In their view, the visit confirms that French-Syrian relations have left behind the stage of strong tension through which they had passed during recent years, reaching the point of breaking relations after both Paris and Damascus called back their ambassadors for consultation in the summer of 1982.

More than one observer believes that this official visit by President Mitterrand to Damascus confirms France's desire to establish normal relations with Syria and remove all causes for dispute between the two countries. The importance of the French president's visit to Damascus also comes from the gravity of the subjects which President Mitterrand will discuss with President Hafiz al-Asad, since there is a strong conviction in Paris (after developments in the region during the past few months) that Damascus has an influential role in the course of events in the Middle East with its various crises. This was confirmed by Claude Cheysson, French minister of external relations, when he announced the news of President Mitterrand's visit to Damascus to the External Relations Committee of the French parliament. Cheysson said: "Despite the existence of some differing points of view between France and Syria, President Mitterrand believes that the influential role played by Syria in the Middle East obliges us to pursue contacts with it."

AL-TADAMUN has learned from well-informed French diplomatic sources that Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou, who has good relations with Francois Mitterrand in the framework of the Socialist International and the European Common Market and who made an official visit to Damascus

in the middle of November, opened the way to the Syrian capital for President Mitterrand by affirming a European role in the Middle East. During his visit, the Greek prime minister announced that Greece will submit an initiative on the Middle East within the EEC. AL-TADAMUN has learned that the Green initiative will be in coordination with France, which is aspiring in turn to gather around it the approval of the European Common Market countries during the European summit conference to be held in Dublin, Ireland early next month.

President Mitterrand will discuss with President al-Asad the broad lines of this European initiative, which is aimed at reaching an agreement to hold an international conference on the Middle East in which the United States, the Soviet Union and Europe would participate, in addition to all of the parties of the Arab-Israeli conflict, within the framework of the United Nations.

The other area to be discussed by President Mitterrand in Damascus will be related to developments in the Lebanese crisis, because Paris attaches great importance to Syria's role in achieving national accord in Lebanon, especially after the return of an atmosphere of trust to Syrian-Lebanese relations following the summit meetings between Syrian and Lebanese leaders. President Mitterrand, who intends to have his country play a role in solving the Lebanese crisis in view of France's deep-rooted historical ties with Lebanon, knows full well that Paris must consult and communicate with Damascus on any position it takes, especially since the French president is very much aware that France is the only state which enjoys some confidence on the part of both the Arabs and Israelis in an equal and balanced fashion. Observers in Paris feel that President Mitterrand will mention again to President al-Asad in Damascus and Shimon Peres in Paris the role previously played by France when it acted as mediator in the exchange of prisoners between the Palestinians and Israelis last year. That French mediation won the confidence of both sides. The French president will mention this role of his country to assure both Syria and Israel that France can be the true guarantor for the simultaneous Syrian and Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. The anticipated French mediation with Syria and Israel to withdraw from Lebanon was among the main topics discussed by Francois de Grossouvre, Middle East advisor to President Mitterrand, during his visit to Beirut last week and his meeting with President al-Jumayyil. The French delegate conveyed the Lebanese view to President Mitterrand. This requires that Israel withdraw first from Lebanese territory, while Syria would then honor its official pledges to Beirut to withdraw from Lebanon as soon as the Israeli withdrawal operation was complete. Observers feel that President Mitterrand will have a major role with Syria and Israel to achieve such a withdrawal if his visit to Damascus opens doors of trust between France and Syria, and if President Mitterrand's efforts with Shimon Peres succeed at their meeting in Paris early next month.

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CSO: 4404/172

SYRIA

SOVIET DEPUTY TRADE DIRECTOR LAUDS COMMERCIAL TIES WITH SYRIA

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 21 Sep 84 p 2

[Article by B.K. Gurov, deputy trade director for Asian nations in the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Trade: "Soviet-Syrian Trade and Economic Relations"]

[Text] The Soviet Union's commercial and economic relations with developing countries are expanding from one year to the next. They rest on the enduring principles of Lenin, based on complete equality, respect for the sovereignty of all groups, non-intervention in internal affairs of other countries, and common benefit.

Even if these relations are between countries with different economic and social structure, they are relations of a new type embodying the highest ideal of solidarity, support and cooperation between countries, resting on friendship.

The Arab countries occupy an important position in the framework of the foreign trade and economic relations of the Soviet Union, and these countries have more than a quarter of its trade with the developing countries.

The collaboration between the Soviet Union and the Syrian Arab Republic is the best example of those characteristic relations. For a long time, Syria was a major partner of the Soviet Union and occupied fourth or fifth place in trade between the Soviet Union and the countries of the Near and Middle East. This situation was motivated to a high degree by the presence of a firm base of legal texts and agreements between the two countries. Commercial agreements between the Soviet Union and Syria developed to a great extent on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, with the foundation laid by the economic agreements and long-term payment agreements signed since 1965, starting from those commercial agreements.

The foundation laid between the Soviet Union and Syria was the signing of trade agreements for the periods of 1971-75, 1976-80, and 1981-85. The trade agreement now in effect, which was signed in May 1981, afforded the opportunity for more commercial growth between the two countries,

which gives a splendid example for strengthening the Friendship and Cooperation Agreement between the Soviet Union and Syria, signed on 8 October 1980.

The exchange lists between the two sides had been laid and defined. In addition, the agreements specified precisely that the two sides would try to increase trade so that they could sign contracts to deliver unscheduled goods. A major part of the trade, especially of Soviet exports to Syria, takes place under the Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement signed between the two countries. The agreement also specified that a number of major economic projects requiring large investments would be built in Syria.

Work is under way, with the aid of the Soviet Union, to increase the power capacity of the Euphrates hydroelectric complex by erecting high-tension lines and irrigating and farming land. New railroads are being built and existing lines are being modernized. Oil fields are being opened, and geological searches for oil are under way.

Most of the costs and expenses of this work are covered by credits granted by the Soviet Union. These credits are covered to a great extent by Syrian goods sent to the Soviet Union. The volume of trade between the two countries is determined by the size of the actual shipments of Soviet and Syrian goods under the trade agreement. It is also covered by shipments of Soviet goods under the technical cooperation agreements. In the 1970's and early 1980's, trade between the Soviet Union and the Syrian Arab Republic has been characterized by steady growth. In 1983 this trade amounted to 504.9 billion rubles, or about eight times the figure for 1970.

The most important Soviet exports to the Syrian Arab Republic are machinery and factory equipment, as well as spare parts and units. To guarantee the level of performance of Soviet machinery delivered to Syria, technical service stations and other important facilities are being set up. In addition to machinery and factory equipment, the Soviet Union is exporting to Syria lumber, (mudlafanah) iron pieces, cement, chemical supplies, drugs, and a wide variety of manufactured goods and cultural articles. At the same time, the Soviet Union has increased its purchases of traditional Syrian exports: crude oil, cotton, wool, and tanned and raw hides. Syrian exports of consumer goods to the Soviet Union have escalated in recent years: cotton thread, silk and cotton fabrics, knit clothing, linens, cigarettes, perfumes, cosmetics, and other products manufactured by the public and private sector organizations.

The share of these Soviet imports from Syria rose from 11 percent in 1970 to 35 percent in 1983; that is, it more than tripled.

Increasing Syrian exports to the Soviet Union, and consumer goods in particular, have created favorable conditions for developing related industries in Syria by supplying these industries with firm markets for their products.

The Soviet foreign trade organizations are concluding trade deals with the public sector organizations in the Syrian Arab Republic and with private companies. Preference is given to private sector organizations. Soviet exports to Syria in practice consist of products of the public sector: machinery and factory equipment, (mudlafanah) iron products, cans made of tin plate, (mughlafanah) iron sheets, lumber and cement.

As for goods imported by the Soviet Union from Syria, the state organizations account for more than half of them. The Soviet foreign trade organizations purchase commodities such as crude oil, cotton, cotton thread and tobacco from the Syrian public sector organizations. At the same time, there have been constant commercial contacts for several years with a number of private organizations in Syria. We must not fail to mention first-rate trade partnerships with private organizations such as: Sarah, Rabat, Taqi-al-Din, Kalus, Tabbarah, Nahas, Lutfi and Saghar Azadah.

The development of productive economic relations was stimulated by cooperation between the chambers of commerce and industry in the Soviet Union and the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Soviet Union's customary participation in the Damascus International Exposition, which takes place under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Soviet Union, has incomparable value, from the commercial point of view and from the point of view of strengthening and expanding commercial relations with representatives of the ministries of the Syrian Arab Republic and their departments and with the state and private organizations.

In 1984, the Soviet Union will have participated in the Damascus International Exposition for the 30th time. The products of 16 foreign trade organizations in the Soviet Union represent the Soviets at the exposition. These include the following organizations: Traktorexport, Aviaexport, Izumallexport, Raznuexport, Zabshastexport, Stankoimport and Ishtimintar.

The outstanding Soviet exhibit is still attracting large numbers of visitors and holding their great interest. It is a lively presentation of the country's achievements in every field and sector of the national economy, science and culture. It is a true reflection of the Soviet Union's peaceful policy of international aid to developing nations, and it shows the Soviet Union's export potential.

At the end of 1983, the first fair of its kind was held in Moscow for products of Syrian consumer commodity industries. When Syria Minister of Economy and Foreign Trade Dr Salim Yasin spoke at the opening of that fair, he said: "In spite of the complex conditions in the Middle East, Syrian-Soviet trade is developing in vitality and growing from year to year."

The fair was aglitter with a wide variety of products, such as refrigerators, television sets, clothing, perfumes, cosmetics, carpets, furniture, kitchen utensils, various fabrics and textiles, synthetic and natural hides and paper goods.

The fair was an expression of the desire of both the Soviets and the Syrians for further development of their productive commercial partnership. It was a sign of the successes recorded by the developing Syrian economy, and an incentive to strengthen relations between the Syrian state organizations and private companies, on one hand, and the Soviet foreign trade organizations, on the other.

Trade between the Soviet Union and the Syrian Arab Republic, which is an important communications tool in the total framework of Soviet-Syrian relations, is moving forward on the basis of equality and mutual benefit for the two countries.

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CSO: 4404/172

SYRIA

DEVELOPMENTS IN TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS SECTORS REVIEWED

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 28 Nov 84 p 3

[Text] The transport and communications sectors constitute important and vital parts of the state's economic activity and play a prominent role in the economic development process in view of their repercussions on the state's various economic and social activities.

Despite the service nature of these sectors, their economic concepts and their major contributions to the general national product make them important sectors, whose development is reflected in the form of positive effects on the development of production and the extension of the services required by all social groups.

Under the corrective movement, the transport and communications sectors enjoy the fact that the state takes a special interest in it. In view of its geographical and strategic location, the Syrian Arab region is the key of the Middle East to the West. Therefore, the various 5-year plans have sought to buttress the transport and communications sectors, and diverse projects have been implemented. These include airport and harbor projects and telecommunications projects.

The returns on these projects are:

The construction of Latakia harbor, the construction of first-rate roads, that is, highways on the Damascus-Aleppo-al-Ladhiqiyah--Dayr al-Zawr lines, and the construction of railroads between al-Qamishli, al-Raqqah and Aleppo and al-Ladhiqiyah. Furthermore, many bridges have been built to ease traffic congestion, and there are still many executive projects being implemented.

We will review in figures the most significant developments of the transport and communications sectors in the past 2 decades of the revolution's life.

It is well known that vehicular transport is still the most widespread type in the country. Naturally, this is due to the short distances between the geographical areas that are limited to the country on the one hand and the availability of this means of transport on the other.

From this premise, the state has attached a special importance to projects for repairing roads and increasing their number until railroad transport projects are finally completed. Statistics show that the length of asphalt roads increased from 4,926 km in 1963 to 17,238 km in 1983, that is, these lengths have increased by about three and a half times. Table 1 shows the development of the lengths of the land routes.

It is worth mentioning that there are dirt roads which have been leveled and whose length was 1,951 km in 1980. Generally speaking, we have noticed, by means of the foregoing figures, that the lengths of the asphalt roads increased by 64 percent between 1963 and 1970 and by 113 percent between 1970 and 1983. Furthermore, one notices the rising ratio of asphalt roads to the total length of networks because, at this time, they constitute 79 percent as compared to 85 percent in 1963.

Land Transport Means

Statistics show that at the end of 1983, the number of overland transport amounted to 235,982 vehicles of all types, that is, an increase of 526 percent in comparison to the 1963 volume, as is illustrated in Table 2.

In fact, the development of vehicles in the country, where no relevant industry exists, is affected by two basic factors, which are annual imports and vehicle life. Statistics show that there is a noticeable development in the passenger transport fleet. The increase ratio amounts to 401 percent for tourist vehicles and jeeps during the 1963-1983 period, and to 532 percent for buses and minibuses.

Commodity Transport Demand

It is known that the growth of the commodity transport movement generally depends on a number of factors, the most important of which are:

- The existence of a sophisticated road network reaching all production areas and import centers.
- The quantitative and qualitative availability of transport means in a manner compatible with the nature of products or imports.
- The evolution of economic activity in the commodity sectors and in the export-import-transit movement.

We will briefly outline the development of some of these factors:

Inland Transport Through Transport Organization Bureaus

Prior to the emergence of the corrective movement in 1970, there were no offices for the organization of inland transport in the true sense, ever since trucks began transporting goods among the provinces and between these provinces and the neighboring Arab countries in the absence of any organizational program. This state of affairs directly affected the overland

transport movement. However, with the innovation of the transport offices, the "turn offices," it became possible to organize the overland transport process and to establish the level of truck operations in the country on the one hand and to determine operational pressure existing on the overland routes as well as the kinds of exchanged goods and the mode of their distribution on the other.

Table 3 clarifies the evolution of transport by public vehicles, both inland and abroad.

Transport Across Border

The country's geographical location has made it a vital and strategic corridor for transit. Cross-border transport includes the goods which pass through the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic from the land, sea and air borders en route to the other borders. Therefore, transit may be divided into two categories:

1. Direct: this includes the entry of foreign goods passing through the country and their shipment, without these goods entering bonded or free zone depots.

2. Indirect: this includes the entry of imported goods from abroad, which are deposited in bonded or free zone stores and are then reshipped. As soon as they enter Syrian territory, the foreign goods become subject to customs rules and organizational procedures varying in accordance with the purpose behind the entry of these goods. Economically speaking, we can distinguish among three kinds of goods:

1. Imported goods: these are the goods crossing the border for the purpose of meeting local consumption.

2. Exported goods: these are the goods leaving the country across the border for export purposes.

3. Transit goods: these are the goods traversing the country on their way from one customs center to another.

Table 4 elucidates the development of cross-border transport.

This table clarifies for us the fact that cross-border transport increased by 12 percent in the 1972-1982 period and that it is the highest increase which has occurred in Arab transit because it reached 105 percent. In return, a drop in the import-export volume in the same period becomes noticeable, since imports dropped by 52 percent and exports by 77 percent. Accordingly, the Fifth 5-year Plan noticed the development of cross-border transport, because the plan noted the need for:

- Achieving an increase in the main and secondary road network.
- Improving the specifications of the existing road network.

- Consolidating the fleet of passenger transport vehicles operating among the provinces and within the cities.
- Increasing the number of trucks with a load capacity of 12 tons and over.

Railroad Transport

Railroad transport is regarded as the second main transport means in view of the special advantages which characterize this transport means. The most important of these advantages are the element of safety, low transport fares and large commodity transport capability. The country's various development plans have pursued the course of developing this vital and important utility by way of building new railroads and repairing the old network. Table 5 shows the development of railroad lengths in the country.

Air Transport

The importance of air transport grew in the Syrian Arab region in its capacity as one of the main external transport means, particularly after Damascus airport was put into active operation. There are now in the Syrian Arab region six main airports distributed among Damascus, Aleppo, al-Qamishli, al-Ladhiqiyah, Tadmur and Dayr al-Zawr. Statistics indicate that the number of aircraft that flew to Syrian airports increased by 47 percent during the 1963-1983 period. Furthermore, the number of arriving and departing passengers and of transit passengers increased by 549 percent. This number amounted to 1,383,000 passengers, as compared to 213,000 passengers in 1963. The Fifth 5-year Plan stipulated the development of this transport sector, since this plan noted the need for:

- Raising the passenger-receiving capability of Damascus International Airport to 2.5 million passengers a year.
- Reinforcing the fleet of the Syrian Arab Airline Establishment with three modern planes.

Maritime Transport

The Syrian Arab region is considered one of the most important main outlets of the Middle East to the West. It is also regarded as one of the most important states in the Middle East area so far as trade exchange and import-export movement are concerned.

The Syrian harbors are important because of the geostrategic position enjoyed by this country, the numerous communications lines which connect the country internally and externally and the reflections of these communications lines on the movement of trade in particular.

There are now three developed harbors in the country, to wit: Tartus harbor, al-Ladhiqiyah harbor and Baniyas harbor, in addition to a small harbor on Arwad Island.

Table 6 shows the country's maritime transport activity. It is worth noting that the Fifth 5-year Plan viewed the development of this vital utility, since it pointed to the need for:

- Raising the capability of Tartus harbor and the capability of the phosphate quay.

- Maintaining posts and radio-telecommunications

Postal, telephone and telegraphic services have become an important necessity in this century. Our contemporary world now witnesses a great technological development in this domain as a result of the increasing dependence on these means and of their importance in the construction of a developed and contemporary society.

In the postal and radio-telecommunications sectors, the Syrian Arab region has witnessed an important and great evolution, and the country has been connected internally and externally by sophisticated and modern means.

In this respect, statistics show that in 1970, the number of postal and telephone centers increased by a ratio of 33 percent over the number of postal and telephone centers in 1963. In 1983, this ratio shot up to 58 percent. Furthermore, the post office boxes scattered in various places in the cities increased from 8,133 boxes in 1970 to 28,360 boxes in 1983, that is, an increase of 249 percent.

With regard to telephone lines, semiautomatic telephones were canceled only very recently, and there are now in the country only two kinds of lines, that is, automatic and manual lines.

Statistics indicate that the number of telephone lines increased by 63 percent during the 1963-1970 period and that this ratio shot up to 516 percent in 1983, that is, it increased by more than 5 times.

By comparing the number of the people to the number of telephone lines, we find that in 1963, the number for every 1,000 citizens was 13.5 telephone lines. This ratio rose to 17.5 telephone lines in 1970 and to 43.1 telephone lines in 1983, that is, an increase of 3 times over the number of lines in 1963.

Table 7 shows a comparison of the number of people to the number of telephone lines. It is worth noting that about 40 percent of the telephone lines are concentrated in Damascus Province, which is followed by Aleppo Province with 15 percent and then by Hims, Hamah and Latakia provinces.

In the field of development of the postal, telephone and telecommunications sectors, the Fifth 5-year Plan marked the need for:

- Increasing the number of post office boxes by a ratio of 131, and doubling the number of post offices and branches.

- Doubling the number of automatic and manual telephone and telex subscribers.

- Increasing the number of circuits among the cities and the number of international communications and relay circuits, and accompanying these increases with an increase in the ratio of subscribers to automatic trunk dialing by about 45 percent. Therefore, in this brief review of the development of the communications sector in Syria, we realize that the transport and communications sector has developed greatly under the aegis of the corrective movement and that this important sector has begun constituting an important proportion of our gross national product and that there a special interest has been taken in developing this sector so that along with the other economic sectors, it will contribute to building a modern and developed Syria.

Table 1. Development of Inland Routes, 1963-1983

<u>Year</u>	<u>Asphalt Roads</u>	<u>Paved Roads</u>
1963	4,926	898
1970	8,096	1,500
1980	14,696	2,169
1983	17,238	4,554

Table 2. Development of Overland Transport Means, 1963-1983

<u>Transport Means</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>Record Number</u>
Tourist and Jeep	23,095	30,530	115,639	501
Bus and Microbus	1,849	1,760	11,679	632
Truck	10,688	11,428	35,132	329
Tanker	612	1,146	2,331	381
Van	1,474	4,724	71,201	4,830
Total	37,718	49,588	235,982	626

Table 3. Public Vehicle Transport Inside and Outside the Country, 1970-1981

<u>Data</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1981</u>
Load, 1,000 tons/km	899,904	2,223,000
Distance, 1,000 km	55,732	110,151
Fare, 1,000 Syrian lira	61,146	329,911

Table 4. Transport Development Across the Border

<u>Kind of Transport</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>Change Ratio</u>
Import	572,106	274,252	-52
Export	296,600	68,565	-77
International transit	503,115	454,513	-10
Usual transit	212,838	323,637	52
Arab transit	707,038	1,449,481	105
Total	2,291,697	2,570,448	12

Table 5. Development of Railroads Lengths

<u>Kinds of Lines</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1983</u>
Ordinary line	543	833	1,686
Narrow-guage line	301	307	341
Total	844	1,140	2,027

Table 6. Development of Maritime Transport Activity

<u>Data</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1983</u>
Number of incoming ships	2,947	3,209	2,623
Number of arriving passengers	1,156	3,361	11,932
Number of departing passengers	1,593	2,146	6,842
Imported goods	990	2,260	10,187
Exported goods	25,439	34,585	8,870

Table 7. Number of People Compared to Number of Telephone Lines

<u>Data</u>	<u>1963</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1983</u>
1. Population number/(1,000)	4,992	6,305	9,611
2. Number of telephone lines	67,230	110,591	414,213
3. $\frac{\text{Item 2}}{\text{Item 3}}$	13.5	17.5	43.1

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CS0: 4404/159

SYRIA

ECONOMIC SEMINAR DISCUSSES AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 4 Dec 84 p 4

[Article by Jamal 'Amir: "Syria's Agriculture and Agricultural Development in Tuesday's Economic Seminar; Qaddurah Underlines Important Role of Agricultural Public Sector and Need for Economic Utilization of Underground and Surface Water"]

[Text] "Agriculture and Agricultural Development in Arab Syria" was the title of the lecture delivered by 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, the deputy prime minister for economic affairs, as part of the seminars conducted this year by the Economic Sciences Society at the Arab Cultural Center in Damascus.

At the outset of the seminar, the lecturer spoke of the importance of agriculture in insuring the food security that has become a fundamental demand and an essential need, adding: Those concerned with continuation of the scientific economic given facts are aware that the fundamental sources of revenues with which civilization is built are numerous. Life has been shifting from one source to another. At the outset, the reliance was on agriculture, then the inclination was toward industry and finally came the role of oil. But now people have begun to return to the roots and origins--agriculture.

Why Turn Toward Agriculture

The lecturer wondered: Why should we in Syria give the priority at present and for a considerable time in the future to agriculture?

Explaining, the lecturer said: We must do this because we have the human and material resources and the climatic conditions and because we are a part of this world which is seeking to crystallize the food security theory. Moreover, the agricultural sector is of great importance because it is a fundamental source for the operation of a large part of this country's industrial sector. Agriculture has been and continues to be one of the major weapons in the spheres of international struggle. The party which ruled Guatemala was a banana company and the party which ruled Cuba was the U.S. sugar companies. Even at present, grains are one of the weapons used to put pressure on numerous countries.

What Does Year of Agriculture Mean?

We have said that 1983 was the year of agriculture. Some understood this to mean that all the agricultural problems would be solved in 1 year. This is a misunderstanding. The year of agriculture means finding out and defining the agricultural problems and charting the successful way to solve them and to persuade people that agriculture has become one of the state's priorities.

Existing Reality

Regarding Syria's real agricultural situation, Qaddurah said: The existing agricultural situation in Syria demonstrates fully the vast dimensions of the tasks entrusted not only to the people concerned with agriculture but also to all of society's influential forces. From some of the given facts available to us, we can imagine the volume of the problems facing our agriculture and the number of years we need to achieve the goal we seek.

The area of Syria's cultivable lands amounts to 6,195,000 hectares of which 93 percent is exploited. Irrigated lands amount to 9 percent of the area. Here emerges the vast size of the problem we have to solve in order to increase the irrigated acreage so as to end the bond between a number of basic crops and fate. Increasing the irrigated area and the area cultivated with grains means facing the crises emanating from drought. This year, we have imported wheat for \$210 million and last year we imported wheat for \$110 million. If we increase the currently irrigated area by threefold, we can then imagine the dimensions of the positive yield we will reap.

Fragmentation of Landed Property

The deputy prime minister for economic affairs added that the fragmentation of landed property is one of the important problems facing the agricultural sector and wondered: Why doesn't the government control agriculture? Answering, he said: The reason is that the agricultural sector [ownership] is fragmented. Average ownership does not exceed 4 hectares and this stands as an obstacle in the face of the mechanized utilization and fertilization of these lands and in the face of making large allocations for such acreage. At present, the agricultural public sector utilizes no more than 2 percent of the cultivable lands, the cooperative sector 25-27 percent of the acreage and the private sector 73 percent of the acreage. Therefore, we must raise the percentage of the public sector's control of agriculture through the reclamation of new lands which will come under state control.

Good Word Meant for Evil

In the past, we all heard somebody tell us: Colonialism seeks to keep us as an agricultural country so that we may continue to be a market for its products and so that we may continue to supply it with the raw materials it needs for its industries.

This was the premise for the industrial leap and development experienced by our country, coupled with turning a blind eye to agriculture. This is why the big

investments in the 5-year plans were channelled toward other sectors. The volume of the 5-year plan's investments has been increasing but the percentage contribution of the agricultural sector has not been growing, even though increasing quantitatively. In the third 5-year plan, the investment in agriculture amounted to 30 percent of the total investments. In the fourth plan, it amounted to 20 percent and in the fifth plan, i.e. before raising the year of agriculture slogan, the percentage amounted to 11 percent. Thus, the percentage has been declining, even though we must stress that the absolute figure allocated for investment in the agricultural sector has been higher in each plan than in the previous one.

Manpower Drain

Qaddurah added: The lack of attention given to agriculture led to the migration of agricultural workers to other sectors and the agricultural sector became a source of supply for the other sectors.

In 1971, the number of agricultural workers amounted to 58.6 percent of the workers in all the sectors. In 1982, this percentage dropped to 32 percent and in 1984 it declined even further. In 10 years, this decline rate amounted to nearly 30 percent. If we assume that machinery has replaced 10 percent of this lost labor, then we can say that 20 percent of the agricultural workers have abandoned this sector. Meanwhile, the number of industrial workers has grown by 93 percent and of service workers by 300 percent.

Reclamation Story

The deputy prime minister for economic affairs went on to ask: What plans have we drawn up to devote the necessary attention to agriculture? In reply, he said: We have said that the acreage of reclaimed and cultivated land must increase and new areas must be brought into the sphere of utilization. We started reclamation and its story turned out to be like Joseph's story because reclamation is a new experience.

We did not fully define the reclamation problems and we did not set the priority for the sites to be reclaimed.

In the fourth 5-year plan, we said: We must reclaim 100,000 hectares. What was actually reclaimed did not exceed 10,000 hectares and what was utilized did not exceed 4,000 hectares, and even these 4,000 hectares have their problems.

In the fifth 5-year plan, we said: Let us reclaim 200,000 hectares. After debates, this figure was reduced to 53,000 hectares. We are now in the 3d year of the fifth 5-year plan and the land reclaimed has not exceeded 12,000 hectares.

We believe that this reduction has been in the interest of reclamation because we said that we must eliminate salinity from the soil before the land turns saline and unproductive. This is why we have changed the reclamation sites. We used to reclaim areas where there is no labor and were thus forced to transport workers for a distance of 50-60 kilometers to get to those areas.

Meanwhile, the land was incapable of covering the costs of those farmers. Consequently, we said: The reclamation processes must be implemented in sites where human resources are available.

Last year, we included 120,000 hectares in the desalination processes. This year, we have desalinated nearly 60,000 hectares. In the Lower Euphrates Basin, we have drilled more than 75 wells and dug more than 40 drainage ditches. The desalination processes require wells and drainage ditches in order to transform the soil into productive land.

In the past, we built dams without building the necessary networks and then when we wanted to utilize the dam we would remember that this dam requires a network. Last year, we started building the networks needed by numerous surface dams and decided that no dam would be built unless the networks needed for the lands it irrigates are built at the same time.

The lecturer added: All forms of our utilization of the underground water are quasi-successful because the scientific methods to utilize these waters have not been followed until now. This is why we are now conducting a study on utilizing the five basins existing in Syria. I believe that this study has been completed.

Growing Need for Fertilizers

Our farmer did not believe in the importance of fertilizer. The situation is now different. At present, the farmers tell us: You have exposed the season to danger because you did not supply us with 15,000 tons of urea fertilizer, a fertilizer which nobody wanted in 1981. However, we are still using fertilizers at a lower rate than established in the advanced countries.

Agriculturally, our ambition next year is to see our rate of fertilizer use rise to 50 percent of the acknowledged rate. Moreover, the pest control operations are not up to the required level. I have been told that Syria fights crop pests 1.5 times annually whereas they are fought 4 times annually in Lebanon.

We Have Not Imported Fertilizers

In Syria, we need fertilizers valued at 1.3 billion Syrian pounds annually. Our existing plants have, despite all the obstacles, been able to meet the need and we did not import last year any of the fertilizer varieties produced in the country.

Thus, we conclude by saying that supplying the agricultural sector's basic needs is one of the most important fundamental lines we must follow. The number one slogan of the sixth 5-year plan will be "agriculture," then energy, then industry and then the services. All the effects and all the investments will be channelled toward agriculture.

Contrary Decision

This year, we have been compelled to make a decision contrary to all our partisan aspirations and all our convictions and decrees, permitting the private sector to import fodders to its heart's desire even though we have an organization specialized in this sphere. We were compelled to make this decision in order to save a part of the livestock herd existing in the country.

Why Turn Toward Agriculture?

The deputy prime minister further said: This year, we purchased wheat for \$210 million. This figure is higher than what was spent on the Ministry of Industry in the past 10 months, namely \$200 million. What we have spent for wheat does not include the expenditures on barley or on fodders. This year, we opened a credit of \$73 million for fodder. Last year, the figure was \$42 million.

What Have We Achieved in Agricultural Sector?

The lecturer then asked: Have we accomplished anything in the agricultural sector?

In reply, he said: Yes, we achieved a big accomplishment in the past 3 years. Both aspects of agricultural production have grown by 5 percent annually. In 1983, the production value amounted to 19,724,000,000 [Syrian pounds], meaning that agriculture's contribution to the gross national revenues rose from 10-11 percent to reach 18 percent in the past 3 years. At its acceptable limit, this contribution must reach 40 percent, if the conditions necessary for the agricultural renaissance become available.

In the past 10 years, the acreage cultivated with crops has increased. The acreage cultivated with wheat has increased by 150 percent over what it was 10 years ago and production by 264 percent over what it was. In 1981, we produced 1.8 million tons of wheat.

The acreage cultivated with barely has increased by 200 percent over what it was 10 years ago and production by 600 percent over what it was. In 1979, we imported 100,000 tons of barley whereas in 1981, we sold some of this crop. In 1984, we were compelled to import one quarter million tons of barley.

Millet: This year, we needed 400,000 tons, of which we have produced 59,000 tons. It is expected that next year's production will amount to one quarter million tons.

The deputy prime minister went on to say: We have set up a poultry industry but have not supplied this industry's needs of some basic fodders, including yellow corn. We have turned our attention to green fodders in particular. The acreage cultivated with green fodders has increased by 500 percent and the production by 800 percent in 10 years. Even though the agricultural and livestock production sectors have grown by a small rate, their growth has been reasonable. In the livestock sector, sheep flocks have increased by

5.7 percent, goat herds by 4 percent, poultry by 8 percent, meat [cattle] by 9 percent and eggs and milk by 9 percent in the past 10 years. I can say that in the past 4 years, excluding this year because of difficult climatic conditions, we have been the number two country in the world in cotton productivity per acreage unit and the number three country in terms of the productivity of milking cows.

In the past 5 years, we have increased the number of tractors in Syria by 59 percent. This is a small percentage. We now have 36,000 tractors whereas Czechoslovakia, a country with an equal population, has 260,000 tractors. It is to be noted that the manufacturing of tractors has increased by 55 percent this year. This is an acceptable economic percentage. We have raised the capacity of the tractors plant from 3,500 tractors in 1980 to 4,200 tractors produced last year.

We have achieved a big qualitative leap in the cultivation of sugar beets, even though we have suspended for only this year the cultivation of this crop in the eastern provinces because the world sugar prices are low. This is why we decided to import some of this commodity instead of keeping some plants in operation. In 1979, we produced nearly 300,000 tons of beets whereas we have produced this year 1.23 million tons. This means that we have introduced a new strategic crop to this country. This is a major, hard and difficult accomplishment. Cotton had been declining in Syria since 1979 but last year we produced 529,000 tons. In 3 years, our production increased by 175,000 tons and a British magazine said, speaking of the Syrian economy, that Syria is turning from oil to cultivating cotton and some other crops. Despite this year's frost and despite the failure of the crop to grow in some areas, we expect to produce nearly 420,000 tons.

Our Tendencies

Thus, our tendencies are to continue on the path of the ideal utilization of water resources through employing the modern methods of irrigation by sprinkling or dripping, to increase the cultivated acreage and to increase the number of dams that transform large areas of land from dryfarming to irrigated lands and that generate power. This year, we have laid the cornerstone and have begun the construction of a number of dam projects, beginning with al-Ba'th regulatory dam, Northern al-Kabir River Dam, the Tishrin Dam, the 16 October Dam, al-Jala' Dam, 'Afrin Dam, al-Safrahiyah Dam and ending with al-Sanawbar Dam. Presently, we are conducting studies to build a dam on the Euphrates bend at the site previously known by the name of Yusuf Basha site. We have begun conducting the studies on this dam, which will take 1.5 years, and we will then begin constructing the dam. These dams and networks will increase the [cultivable] area by 200,000 hectares.

We have also issued decree No 3 in which we have not yet defined how to utilize the reclaimed lands. We have said that we should utilize them through production cooperatives and we set up the first production cooperative 2 months ago. In order that this experiment may succeed, we have allocated 6 million Syrian pounds for an area of 1,200 hectares and we have given the cooperative a grant of 1 million Syrian pounds. This grant will not be recovered but the

6 million pounds will be recovered over a period of 6 years. We have also formed a committee to determine this cooperative's needs of tractors, agricultural equipment and fertilizers.

We have increased the interest-free loans for afforestation activities from 175 Syrian pounds per hectare to 250 Syrian pounds per hectare. We have also made a decision to advance to fruit-tree planting activities an interest-free 5-year loan whose repayment begins at the time the trees bear fruit. This is what has been accomplished in the past 2 years--the 2 years of agriculture. The road is still long. We have set up the basic project for irrigating al-Khabur [basin] which will cost 5 billion Syrian pounds. Briefly, if we examine all the projects for which we have concluded contracts, whose broad lines we have drawn up or whose studies we have conducted in the past 5 years, we would find that agriculture, irrigation and land reclamation have gotten a reasonable share which must be doubled in the coming plans.

In the sphere of mechanization, the Mechanization Organization has been able to make big leaps from 1980 to 1984 and it now has maintenance workshops in most of the governorates. It also has 64 mobile workshops which continued to be idle and unexploited until 1980. Last year, we seeded 300,000 dunums with cotton mechanically and conducted three experiments on mechanical harvesting.

The deputy prime minister for economic affairs went on to say: From what I have said, we conclude the following:

The public sector must play a larger role in agriculture.

Bigger investment must be offered to the private sector so that it may invest in land and use its monies in agriculture instead of channelling them toward the services market.

The rate of financing agricultural operations must be increased.

Efforts must be exerted to stop the migration of agricultural labor.

The underground and surface waters must be utilized economically. We have now raised the slogan of irrigation by sprinkling and we will conduct experiments on 5,500 hectares next year.

We must all exert efforts to meet food consumption from our lands in order to stop importation with hard currency.

Agriculture First

The deputy prime minister added:

The world's average milk consumption [per capita] is 420 kilograms annually whereas our per capita consumption is 100 kilograms. In the advanced world, the average egg consumption is 290 eggs [per capita annually] whereas our consumption is nearly 125 eggs. The average per capita consumption of meat is 80 kilograms annually whereas our country's consumption does not exceed 11

kilograms. This is why we have said that it is necessary that we all work to crystallize the slogan of agriculture first. It is a major national task to have all this country's people rally behind the agricultural sector's march.

Upon concluding his lecture, the deputy prime minister answered the questions and queries raised by the audience and his answers enriched the lecture and shed more light on our country's agriculture.

One of the questions raised said that the lecture did not speak of the development which must be experienced by the agricultural worker and that confining the talk to the material aspect without including man, who is the base of every development process, causes the issue to be incomplete.

In reply, the lecturer said: We have an Agricultural Guidance Directorate which performs what is required of it in the sphere of instructing and guiding farmers. Insofar as man is concerned, it is indisputable that he is the base of every development process. We must first liberate man from the yoke of harmful customs and traditions. This is impossible to achieve through guidance alone. This is why we have conducted two experiments on mechanical harvesting and seeding with the aim of persuading people of the importance of this action. Persuasion through demonstration is more beneficial. We must eradicate the illiteracy of the illiterate and must entrench the theory that land is honor. Generally, we must develop both agriculture and the farmer.

Another question dealt with law No 14, which has not been implemented precisely.

The lecturer answered: Not every law issued is implemented in an ideal manner. A law is issued only because it touches numerous segments of the people--the majority. As for the minority harmed by this law, it is the party that obstructs it. We implemented law No 14 to a certain degree during the fifth 5-year plan. The progress we have achieved in the cultivation of sugar beets emanates from the implementation of this law. It is difficult to move all at once. However, we have said that implementation of the agricultural plans in accordance with the said law is a must. Last year, we drew up the plan to cover the smallest village unit up to the branch agricultural council and we instructed them on the need to implement the plan. One year, the price of garlic rose and everybody proceeded to cultivate garlic. This is something which forced us to destroy 25,000 tons of tomatoes 2 years ago.

Answering another question, the deputy prime minister pointed out that when we say that we will turn to agriculture, this does not mean that we will do so at the expense of industry or of other sectors. It must be known that agriculture has nowadays moved to agro-industry. In the advanced countries, there are agro-industry complexes where the crop is taken to processing directly. We will turn to agriculture and will enhance it. At the same time, we must organize and put into operation the projects we have at our disposal. We must rationalize the industrial onrush, must put what we have at our disposal into ideal operation and must supply the cadre necessary for it. We can then proceed with industry. We have never said that we will stop industry.

SYRIA

BRIEFS

HIMS BUDGET ALLOCATIONS--Hims--The Planning, Programs and Financial Affairs Committee of the Hims Province Council has completed appropriation of the independent budget for 1985. The committee has distributed the financial appropriations of this budget in the following manner: 12.1 million Syrian pounds for projects currently under construction to supply drinking water; 735,000 Syrian pounds for new drinking water projects; 11.2 million pounds for road projects already under construction, including 5 million pounds for roads in the city of Hims; 3.4 million pounds for new road projects; 2 million pounds to complete and furnish schools; 800,000 pounds for health projects and 882,000 pounds for miscellaneous projects and administrative expenditures; 2.2 million pounds in reserve appropriations for essential emergency projects; and 12 million pounds in aid for the cities, towns and municipalities. [Text]
[Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 4 Dec 84 p 2] 8494

CSO: 4404/160

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

GOVERNMENT ATTEMPT TO DIVERSIFY ECONOMY

Beirut AN-NAHAR ARAB REPORT & MEMO in English 7 Jan 85 p 12

[Text]

Bankers and businessmen are reported to be generally unimpressed by President Sheikh Zayed's formation of a seven-man committee to find solutions to the problems facing the UAE economy. That the committee should have been set up at all means, at least, that the government is aware of the impending crisis. Clearly, tackling payments and liquidity problems is urgent. But more important, perhaps, are the fundamental changes that need to be made to diversify the economy. This should have been tackled long before now; but it is better to start it too late than not to start at all.

The economic slump in the United Arab Emirates, brought about by the halving of its oil revenues since 1981, shows little sign of breaking and may get worse through the rest of the 1980s, the *Financial Times* has reported. The federation's banking system is likely to come under increasing strain as oil revenues continue to plummet into the warmer spring weather and if Opec pricing and production discipline holds up. Apart from the generally depressed level of economic activity, many loans risk turning sour and banks may face liquidity problems.

The UAE is overwhelmingly dependent upon oil and gas, a vulnerability which led it earlier this winter to cut up to 45 cents a barrel off its Murban light crude. During 1984 alone, crude oil production in Abu Dhabi dropped by 25 per cent, from 800,000 to 600,000 b/d.

Production — and sales — of Abu Dhabi's oil are the determinants of economic activity throughout the Emirates, and provide nearly 70 per cent of the federal budget. This has already led the federation and the Emirate of Abu Dhabi into deficit budgeting. Although in 1983, the federal government was able to reduce its estimated budget deficit from 5.5bn dirhams to an actual 4.4bn dirhams, the deficit had to be made up by Abu Dhabi, which meant that the Emirate's own budget deficit grew, from 2.9bn to 3.75bn dirhams by the end of 1983. This was expected to be repeated last year and this.

AFGHANISTAN

MUJAHIDIN CONTINUE OPERATIONS IN SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS

Kuala Lumpur BUSINESS TIMES in English 19 Jan 85 p 9

[Text]

KABUL: WINTER in Afghanistan is normally a time when the Mujaheddin resistance fighters visit their families in the refugee camps across the Pakistani border or disappear into the cities for shelter. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan/Soviet forces also tend to retreat into their barracks hoping that their flares will literally freeze any active Mujaheddin to the ground. (The flares take up to 20 minutes to float down and the Mujaheddin have to stay absolutely still if they do not want to be spotted by the infrared imagery planes flying slowly overhead.)

The snow, which now lies deep enough to ski, within 10 km of Kabul, makes movement difficult for both sides: the passes are blocked to Mujaheddin supplies and even tracked vehicles get bogged down. There was a blessed respite from the clatter of helicopters when the city was covered by snowclouds on Dec. 11 and 12.

Although there were some attacks on Kabul last winter long-term residents confidently expected that the level of fighting would die down at the beginning of November. Even the Soviet embassy apparently forecast a lull after the intensive rocketing of September and October.

But the Mujaheddin attacks have continued.

Some 20 to 25 projectiles (whether mortars or rockets was unclear) fell on the Wazir Akbar Khan and Micro-rayon districts, where most of the Afghan party officials and their Russian "advisers" live, on Nov. 2. Three landed near the Khad (secret police) building on the road to the airport and three hit the Radio Afghanistan compound.

Even the local media admitted that something had happened — attacks are not normally reported — and Kabul Radio claimed that four people had been killed and 17 injured.

Two nights later there was a further major attack with projectiles fired from east of the city even before the curfew had started at 10 pm. At least one hit the presidential palace complex; screams were heard and two ambulances were seen to arrive. Two rockets also landed in an Afghan military compound in Wazir Akbar Khan, scattering the soldiers, and another landed just outside. The house of a French teacher who had left on vacation two days before was hit and badly damaged.

Bazaars

At about 11 pm on Nov.

29, several rockets were fired at the Intercontinental Hotel on the western outskirts of the city, where foreign delegations were staying for a conference of the Afro-Asian Peace and Solidarity Organisation.

During the day, the security situation has remained relatively calm, although there is sometimes heavy firing, for instance during a snowfall recently when there was no air cover. The bazaars remain busy and the Russians are out in force shopping in Chicken Street, although there is always a patrol with Kalashnikovs to protect them and many of the men carry pistols.

At 6 p.m. on Dec. 3, a bomb exploded in central Kabul near the Khyber restaurant which is frequented by Khad agents. Shop windows were shattered, but it is not clear if there were any casualties. A Khad jeep was also attacked on Dec. 1 in the Kheir Khana suburb to the north. Russian soldiers with steel helmets and flak jackets are now usually posted at the western perimeter of the Soviet military hospital and also at the main crossroads by the Turkish embassy, which is close to one of the Khad buildings.

The Russians are clearly taking no chances. All their helicopters and transport planes now use diversionary flares when landing and taking off in order to distract heat-seeking missiles. On November 26 at 4 p.m. a helicopter came down in flames just east of the airport and a second helicopter with several soldiers on board is reported to have exploded three days earlier either as it was taking off

or landing.

Several new posts have been built on the low hills surrounding the airport and three Katyusha rocket launchers have been clearly visible at the northern end of the runway. There has been considerable use of rocket launchers recently, both during the day and at night. New bunkers have also been dug on the reverse slopes of the mountains surrounding Kabul, no doubt as part of the three defensive rings which Eastern bloc diplomats claim are being installed.

Outside Kabul, the Mujaheddin also remain very active. A bomb exploded recently in Mazar-I-Sharif, reportedly killing 150 people in a caravan. There have been attacks on government buildings in Herat and numerous incidents in Kandahar. Soviet convoys have been attacked on the road west of Herat and near Ghazni. In the latter incident three armoured vehicles and three trucks were damaged or destroyed and there were 22 casualties among the Soviet DRA forces. Two Mujaheddin were killed and one wounded.

There have recently been rumours that a new Ministry of Security is to be set up combining both Khad and the ordinary police, under the control of Khad's director, Dr Najib-Ullah, who has all the makings of a future Soviet strongman. He recently told an Indian journalist that only 35 per cent of Afghan territory was under the control of the regime.

Quite an admission from such a senior source, since visiting correspondents are usually told that all is quite normal. — FT

AFGHANISTAN

TWO AIR BASES ATTACKED BY RESISTANCE

Paris LE FIGARO in French 23 Jan 85 p 3

[Text] Islamabad (AFP) [French News Agency]--According to western diplomatic sources in Islamabad, the Afghan resistance movement successfully attacked two of the principal Soviet bases in Afghanistan last week, and an intensification of fighting was reported in several provinces.

On 17 January a dozen helicopters were reportedly destroyed on the ground at the Bagram base north of Kabul, attacked by the resistance under cover of a snow storm which prevented the aircraft from taking off. Two days earlier, the resistance reportedly launched a series of rockets at the Qandahar airport in the southwest of the country, destroying an unknown number of aircraft.

According to messages from their Kabul embassies, diplomats report that an aircraft belonging to one of the domestic Afghan airlines was hit by a round of fire from resistance forces on 9 January in the center of the country. Despite his wounds, the pilot was nevertheless able to land at Maimana in the northwest. The same sources confirm rumors already received from various resistance groups in Peshawar reporting increased fighting in Paktia and Nangarhar provinces bordering Afghanistan.

Two Soviet divisions (20,000 men) were reported to have been sent to reinforce Jalalabad, capital of Nangarhar, where the resistance tried to prevent the Soviets from taking control of strategic points along the Pakistan border.

According to the Afghan resistance newspaper in Peshawar, AFGHAN ISLAMIC PRESS, approximately 300 civilians were killed over the last four months in that province as a result of increased Soviet bombardments in reprisal. A commander in the resistance, operating to the west of Jalalabad, declared four days ago that the Soviets were engaged in emptying the strategic regions of this province.

The diplomats also report a resumption of fighting in Herat, the third largest city in Afghanistan located not far from the Iranian frontier. Herat province suffered terribly during 1984 from Soviet bombardments; it is estimated that approximately 5,000 civilians died there during the past year.

According to information circulating in Kabul, Soviet strategists have decided to launch a new far-reaching offensive in mid-March to dislodge for once and for all the resistance troops under Major Ahmad Shah Masud which hang on despite the departure of the civilian population following the staggering blows of the Soviet army in the spring and autumn of 1984.

The government of Babrak Karmal has finally bribed the fundamentalist party, Hezb-e Islami, led by engineer Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, to order its resistance to cease the rocket attacks on Kabul during the twentieth anniversary of the Afghan Communist Party on 10 January.

12308

CSO: 4619/28

AFGHANISTAN

MUJAHIDIN REPORTEDLY KILL COMMANDER, LAUNCH ATTACKS ON HERAT

Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 30 Jan 85 p 1

[Text]

MASHHAD, Khorassan Province (IRNA) - The Afghan Moslem Mujahideen last week killed the commander of state paratroopers in Western Afghanistan, it was announced here Monday.

According to Mujahideen sources Shir Aqa Chungar, was killed by the Afghan Moslem combatants while coming out of the state hospital in Herat, where a number of his troops were hospitalised, last Wednesday.

Three of commander Chungar's companions were also killed and two others, including a high-ranking advisor of the Soviet Red Army were injured, the sources added.

Of the three Moslem combatants who launched the attack, one was martyred and two were captured.

Afghan Moslem revolutionaries launched a series of attacks in west and east of Herat against the joint Afghan and Soviet forces, clearing 57 villages of the enemy. A large number of the joint government and Soviet forces were killed and 200 Afghan troops surrendered to the Moslem revolutionaries, while 50 others were captured.

The Afghan Moslem revolutionaries also seized 550 weapons and 650,000 rounds of ammunition from the enemy.

Meanwhile, Western diplomatic sources in New Delhi reported that although Kabul remained largely quiet as compared to previous weeks, a bomb was said to have exploded in the outpatients departments of a Soviet hospital in the Wazir Akbar Khan area, northeast of the city, killing three Afghan doctors and one other person.

There were also a series of rocket attacks on the airport and the Microrayon housing area of the city in the last ten days.

There were reports of heavy fighting in the eastern part of the country, especially in Nangrahar, Paktia, and Kunarhar, but no details were available.

According to information available to the diplomats, resistance activity was low in most parts of the country because of the heavy snowfall. Most of the activity was centered in the eastern and southeastern areas of Afghanistan, which were relatively warmer, the diplomats said.

The diplomats in Islamabad said that they had "few specific details" about fighting in the eastern provinces except for a resistance attack on a Soviet barrack outside Jalalabad last Friday in which "a number of Soviets" were reportedly killed.

AFGHANISTAN

BRIEFS

RESISTANCE LEADER KILLED--One of the greatest commanders of the Afghan resistance, Zabiullah, aged 30, was killed last 14 December in the north of Afghanistan, betrayed by some of his companions in arms. This information was released yesterday at Peshawar by his own party, Jamiat-e Islami, considered the most important in the Afghan resistance. If it is confirmed that his death is indeed the consequence of an "internal plot" in the resistance movement staged by the Soviet Afghans, that would prove the growing efficacy of infiltration into the ranks of the resistance by the Soviet-Afghan secret services. [Text] [Paris LIBERATION in French 28 Jan 85 p 48] 12308

CSO: 4619/28

INDIA

DMKP GENERAL SECRETARY BRIEFS PRESS ON BOARD MEETING

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 8 Jan 85 p 9

[Text] NEW DELHI, January 7--THE Dalit Mazdoor Kisan Party (DMKP) has demanded the setting up of a judicial commission headed by a supreme court judge to go into the alleged malpractices and misuse of official machinery in the recent Lok Sabha polls. The commission should be asked to submit its report within three months, it said.

The party also plans demonstrations at district headquarters on January 23, the birthday of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, to protest against "massive bungling" in the elections and to arouse mass consciousness against this evil.

The district units of the DMKP in U.P., Bihar, Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and other states have been directed to organise these demonstrations, according to the party general secretary, Mr. S. P. Malaviya.

Major Factor

Briefing newsmen on the outcome of the recent meetings of the party's central parliamentary board and of the district and state office-bearers, Mr. Malaviya said the elections "were not free and impartial and were rigged." The review of the poll results by the parliamentary board showed that the sympathy wave was not a major factor for the Congress victory.

The defeat of the DMKP candidates was due largely to "organised misuse of official machinery, rigging, booth-capturing, malpractices and the use of black money."

Mr. Malaviya conceded that people had rejected the concept of a coalition government. A section of the Hindu votes, which should normally have gone to the BJP, went to the Congress, he said.

He alleged that there were complaints of tampering with ballot boxes and ballot papers even in the Amethi constituency, which returned the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi.

The DMKP has already written to the election commission bringing specific instances of malpractices to its attention and demanding suitable action against

those responsible. The commission should ensure that such irregularities would not be committed in the repoll in Lok Sabha constituencies where the elections were countermanded and in the forthcoming state assembly polls.

Replying to a question regarding the prospects of opposition unity for the assembly elections, Mr. Malaviya said the DMKP was not opposed to this concept, but it would not take any initiative. The party might go it alone in states like Bihar and U.P., where it had a strong base, he said.

PTI adds:

Mr. Charan Singh, DMPK president, has nominated Mr. Ram Jaiwan Singh as president of the Bihar unit. Mr. R. J. Singh is at present the working president of the Bihar unit.

Mr. Charan Singh has also nominated Mr. Santimoy Chatterjee as president of the party's West Bengal unit.

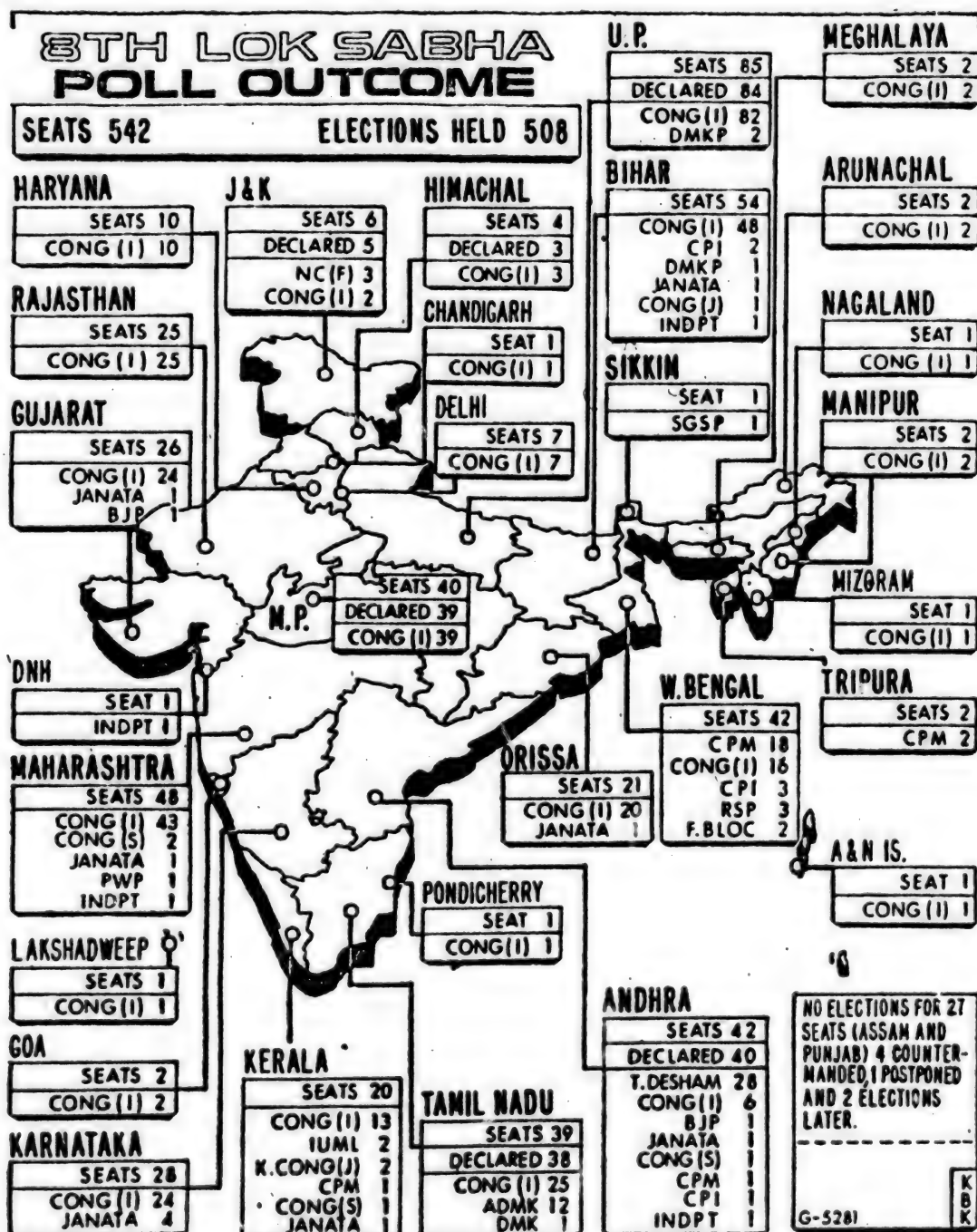
Patna (PTI): The state executive of the Bihar Janata party, after its twoday meeting here decided to initiate dialogues for opposition unity in the coming assembly elections in the state, to provide an alternative to the Congress.

CSO: 4600/1282

INDIA

'TIMES' MAP SHOWS OUTCOME OF LOK SABHA ELECTION

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 8 Jan 85 p 5



INDIA

HARYANA PREPARES NOTE ON BOUNDARY QUESTION

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 8 Jan 85 p 5

[Text] NEW DELHI, January 7--ON the eve of the expected resumption of talks on the Punjab problem, the Haryana government has prepared a detailed note putting forth the geographical and historical justification for the inclusion of Abohar and Fazilka tehsils in Haryana, besides that of the capital city of Chandigarh.

The note points out that the Punjab boundary commission did not recommend the merger of Fazilka tehsil, which it claims to be predominantly Hindi-speaking in Haryana because it did not have contiguity with other Hindi-speaking areas.

But it alleges that the contiguity was broken by a decision of the government of undivided Punjab of transferring the Hindi-speaking village of Kandu Khera, alongwith a number of another Hindi-speaking villages, from Fazilka tehsil to Muktsar tehsil which is now part of Punjab.

'Contiguity Broken'

The transfer of Kandu Khera resulted in the "mischief" of breaking the contiguity of the Hindi-speaking Hissar district with the Hindi speaking Fazilka tehsil of the adjoining Ferozepur district.

The note says, Fazilka and Abohar of Fazilka tehsil formed part of Sirsa district in the 19th century as shown in the settlement records of the district published in 1873, as also in the report on the revision of settlement of Sirsa district submitted by J. Wilson, the settlement officer.

The Punjab boundary commission found the population of Failka tehsil to be predominantly Hindi-speaking with 60.2 per cent of the population speaking Hindi and 39.4 per cent Punjabi.

In the rural areas of the tehsil, according to the commission, the population was 67.6 per cent Hindi-speaking and 39.7 per cent Punjabi-speaking.

The Haryana government note claims that the reason for the transfer of the Hindi-speaking villages to the predominantly Punjabi-speaking area was that it provided continuity between the Punjabi-speaking areas of Punjab and the Punjabi-speaking areas of Rajasthan.

It asserts that the continuity of the Abohar-fazilka Hindi-speaking areas with the state of Haryana, which was broken only by the Hindi-speaking village of Kandul Khera, transferred to the Punjabi-speaking zone on the eve of the demarcation of the Hindi and Punjabi speaking regions, can be restored if the village is returned to Fazilka tehsil where it belongs.

After the publication of the boundary commission report, the Union government decided that 105 villages of Fazilka tehsil and the two towns of Abohar and Fazilka should be transferred to Haryana. In order to provide contiguity between this area and the rest of Haryana, it was decided that a strip of territory of an average width of one furlong along the inter-state boundary between Punjab and Rajasthan in village Kandul Khera of Muktsar tehsil would also be transferred to Haryana.

The note says that the entire length of this strip is approximately eight km and it runs through only one village which is also Hindi-speaking. This strip is not a "corridor" in the true sense of the term as it is not bound on both sides by the same state. It can at best be described as "link strip" which would be bound by two different states on either side.

The note says that it would in fact be appropriate to transfer the whole village and restore the old contiguity of the Hindi-speaking areas.

CSO: 4600/1282

INDIA

AKALI LEADERS REJECT HARYANA MERGER OFFER

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 14 Jan 85 p 4

[Text]

Chandigarh, Jan. 13 (PTI): Two top Akali leaders, Mr Surjan Singh Thekedar and Mr Prem Singh Lalpura, today rejected a proposal by the Haryana chief minister, Mr Bhajan Lal, for the merger of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and the Union territory of Chandigarh, as a solution to the Punjab problem.

Mr Thekedar, convenor of the Akali Dal ad hoc committee and Mr Lalpura, acting president of the SGPC told newsmen at Muktsar in Faridkot district that though Punjab had been getting a "step-motherly treatment" they still would not allow its merger or reunification with other states.

They said before any talks could be initiated with the Centre on Punjab the government must defuse the tension-ridden atmosphere in the state, suggesting that measures like declaration of Punjab as a disturbed area and constitution of special courts be withdrawn. The Dal leaders also demanded release of all Sikh leaders and a judicial probe into incidents of violence following the assassination of Mrs Indira Gandhi.

The proposal was, however, earlier welcomed by various others including the former Union law minister, Mr Jagannath Kaushal. Mr Kaushal said such a step would be in the interest of the country but "if the proposal cannot materialise then Chandigarh should be retained as a Union territory."

Mr Surinder Natha Khosla, former adviser to the Akali Dal, hailed the proposal saying it would offer a lasting solution to the lingering Punjab problem including all river water and territorial disputes among these states. He said the present international situation and heavy build up of arms across the borders demanded immediate reunification of these three states into a stronger and better defended Punjab.

The proposal has also been welcomed by Mr Santokh Singh Randhawa, the former Punjab minister, Mr Bhupal Singh and Mr Mohinder S. Malik, president and general secretary of the Chandigarh unit of the Congress(I) and Mr O.P. Malik, president of the Haryana unit of Congress(S).

CSO: 4600/1298

INDIA

CANADA, SOVIET UNION OFFER MINING KNOWHOW

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 14 Jan 85 p 9

[Text]

Bombay, Jan. 13 (PTI): Mr Horst Schmid, minister for international trade, government of Alberta, Canada, said here that his country would offer its expertise in the field of oil and gas as its contribution to the industrial development of India.

Mr Schmid, who visited the chemtech exhibition here yesterday, said the Canadian expertise embraced various aspects such as the recovery of heavy oil, enhanced recovery, deep drilling in high pressure zones, well stimulation and pipelining projects.

Canada had also developed an excellent technology for sour gas which contained hydrogen sulphide. It was because of this technology that Canada had been enjoying the position of the largest exporter of sulphur produced from natural gas, he said.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union has also showed interest in extending its cooperation in the construction of a coal-dressing factory and a number of colliery projects a press release of the Soviet delegation of the exhibition informed.

A series of negotiations had been conducted with Indian organisations on the construction of alumina and aluminium interogated works in Andhra Pradesh on a compensation basis. The proposals under con-

sideration relate to an annual production of 2.5 million tonnes.

An agreement has also been reached with the Indian side to continue in 1985 the work on the elaboration of basic directions in trade, economic, scientific and technical cooperation for a period beyond 1990.

The Soviet Union has already been rendering assistances to India in implementing a number of projects in fuel and power industries.

These includes the Vin-dhiayachal 1260-MW power plant with a power transmission line, the commissioning of the first 210-MW power plant is scheduled for the first half of 1987 and the completion of the first stage construction is planned for 1989-90.

The commissioning of the Nigahi open cast colliery, first stage, (4.2 million tonnes) is scheduled for 1986 and the Jan-jra Colliery with a capacity of 2.8 million tonnes of coal is scheduled for 1987.

The geophysical exploration of oil and gas is being carried out in West Bengal, and the idle and low-production wells are under repair in Gujarat.

The Soviet organisations have completed delivery of the equipment for the expansion of Bhilai and Bokaro steel plants.

CSO: 4600/1298

SRI LANKA

PRIME MINISTER ON GOVERNMENT HANDLING OF TAMIL PROBLEM

BK151448 Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English 15 Feb 85 p 17

[Text] The visiting Sri Lankan prime minister, Mr Ranasinghe Premadasa, has likened the current communal tension in Sri Lanka to Singapore in the 1950's and early 60's.

Speaking at a reception on Wednesday [13 February] night at the Sri Lankan High Commissioner's residence, Mr Premadasa said Tamil separatists had become terrorists pretending to fight for ethnic and fundamental rights.

"Do not forget there are also external forces helping these terrorists to destabilise and destroy our motherland.

"There is provision in our constitution for the people to decide through the ballot box on the system of government they prefer.

"But, the terrorists have loudly declared they do not believe in the ballot or in the process of consultation to resolve their problems.

"They reject solutions through exchanging words across the table. They say they believe in the exchange of bullets between Sinhala and the Tamil people."

Addressing 250 guests, mostly prominent Sri Lankan professionals or businessmen based here, Mr Premadasa said his government faced criticism like the Singapore government received over the way it dealt with racial tension.

"The Singapore government used all the powers within its command to eradicate violence and terrorism. At the time there were accusations hurled at Singapore from all corners of the world.

"They said dictatorial and undemocratic methods were being used to prevent the violent elements from winning their reasonable demands.

"When we in Sri Lanka take similar steps, is it correct or justified to call us dictators? Sri Lanka is facing the same situation today that Singapore faced some time ago," Mr Premadasa said.

The Sri Lankan leader admitted his government may have acted too late in dealing with communal demands.

But, Mr Premadasa said, this was because his government was so preoccupied with winning the war against poverty.

Singapore's economic success had been a model for Sri Lanka, he said.

Despite having developed the socio-economic infrastructure, such as providing power, irrigation, water supply and housing, the Sri Lankan Government had not been prepared for the tragic clashes between Tamil separtists and Sinhalese, Mr Premadasa said.

The Sri Lankan Leader will meet Singapore's prime minister, Mr Lee Kuan Yew, later today. He arrived here on Wednesday for a 4-day private visit.

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